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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2010

York Man Sues State Police, Claims Beating

By Frank Pizzoli

Brian Keener was sitting in York Hospital with two State Police officers who suspected him of driving under the influence. They wanted him to submit to a blood-alcohol test.

When Keener refused, his decision angered the officers who hauled him out of a chair, beat him with batons, called him a "faggot" and a "queer," handcuffed him, and tazed him.

That's Keener's account of what happened in the wee hours of Aug. 31, 2008, as described in the lawsuit he filed against two State Police officers in U.S. Middle District Court in March.

In the suit, Keener, 46, of Jacobus, York County, alleges the police beat him because he was gay.

Named as defendants in the suit are State Police Cpl. Brian M. Torkar and trooper Sean Taylor.

Representatives of the State Police and the state Attorney General's office, citing policy, would not comment on the case. But in a response to the suit filed in June, police denied nearly all of Keener's allegations.

Nils Frederiksen, spokesman for the Pennsylvania Attorney General Tom Corbett, whose office is defending the troopers, provided a copy of his June 1 response to Keener's allegations.

In it, the state denied Keener was beaten, but acknowledged the officers had to use some force against him.

The state also denied allegations that Torkar taunted Keener with homophobic slurs.

Keener claims he suffered numerous injuries in the beating, including facial fractures, nasal septal deviation, a left-eye hemorrhage, sciatic-nerve injury, temporomandibular joint disorder, tinnitus and tooth damage.

Since the incident, he said he's had a hernia operation, may need a root canal, and may be developing traumatic glaucoma.

He attributes the ailments to the alleged beating.

The state attributed Keener's injuries "to his own actions."

State denies allegations

Keener's conduct warranted the

continued on page 15

Will Lancaster County Keep Human Relations Commission?

Will Harrisburg City Drop Next?

By Frank Pizzoli

In a story taking on regional proportions, Lancaster County Commissioners Craig Lehman and Scott Martin last month heard public testimony on that county's plan to disband the Lancaster County Human Relations Commission.

Will Harrisburg City be the next local governmental entity to drop its human relations commission?

Central Voice discovered a recommendation by Management Partners, Inc. that the financially beleaguered capital city eliminate its Human Resources Commission and forward all complaints to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. The consulting firm had been asked by Harrisburg Mayor Linda Thompson to prepare a financial management plan for the city to consider as it seeks ways to pay down $288 million in debt.

A five-year plan, the report is thought to be "in play" as Harrisburg leaders focus on

continued on page 15

Harrisburg Alerted to Lesbian Health Challenges

By Frank Pizzoli

A group of 26 men and women gathered Aug. 11 to discuss lesbian health challenges at Harrisburg's Metropolitan Community Church. The program, second in an ongoing community education series focusing on lgbt health issues, was sponsored by AIDS Community Alliance.

ACA is looking into the development of an lgbt-based medical and health service currently called The LGBT Health Initiative.

The discussion was lead by Leslie Calman and D Magrini of The Mautner Project, The National Lesbian Health Organization. The project seeks to improves the health of lesbians, bisexual and transgender women who partner with women.

"The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Institute of Medicine have recognized women who partner with women, regardless of income, as a medically

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MORE:

Mullaugh heads coalition
see p. 6

Vicki Lawrence talks
see p. 21

SPECIAL EVENTS
COMING UP AT CLUB XS

CLUB XS

BACK TO SCHOOL PARTY
DJ SETH GOLD • NITE CAMP BOYS

9.18

4TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY
10.2

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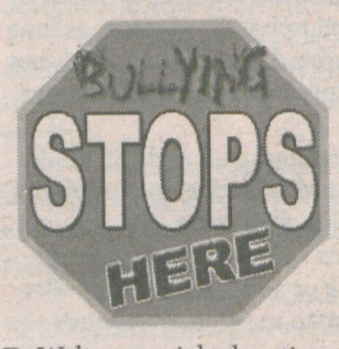
School's In: Classroom Books Matter



By Frank Pizzoli

When a student doesn't feel safe or feel self-worth, they don't learn," says Jenn DeWalt, a special education para-educator at Hempfield High School. She is also a non-faculty adviser for the school's Gay/ Straight Alliance.

Maybe a new set of classroom text books can also help students feel safe and valued.

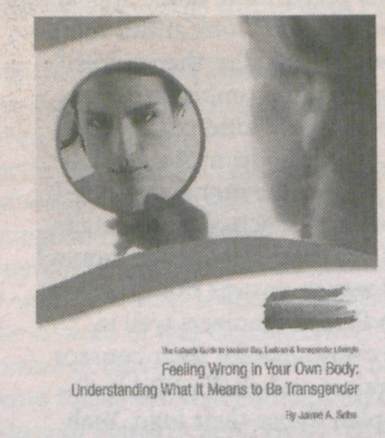
New to the scene is series of educational books for middle school students to learn about homosexuality. "The Gallup's Modern Guide to Gay Lesbian and Transgender Life," presents gay lifestyle in a positive tone as an accepted way of life, not as an "issue".

"if you address issues, questions or concerns head on with students, and explain both sides of something, they come to a better understanding."
Jenn DeWalt

The 15 books comprising the series examine gay lifestyles, positive role models, and supportive communities. According to the 2007 National School Climate Survey by GLSEN only about a quarter of middle school students (23%) reported their school library contained books or other resources that were inclusive of lgbt-related topics, compared to half of high school students (48%).

GLSEN, the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, is the leading national education organization focused on ensuring safe schools for all students. Their survey also revealed middle school students were less likely to report that lgbt-related topics were included in school textbooks and other assigned readings - 6% versus 16% of lgbt students in high school.

"Schools are here to educate and to do that properly, we must provide comprehensive information to students,"
Dr. James T. Sears


The Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian & Transgender Lifestyle
Feeling Wrong in Your Own Body: Understanding What It Means to Be Transgender
By Jaime A. Seba

None of the books are in use at Hempfield High School. Nonetheless, there is a foundation of support for lgbtq students. The issue of lgbt-friendly books and general support is hot. The Rancocas (NJ) School Board voted unanimously to ban a book offering a collection of stories written by lgbt youth. Three teenagers in Montgomery (MD) County have been charged with the alleged murder of gay principal Brian Betts. US Senator Al Franken (D-Minn.) recently introduced a bill prohibiting lgbt-bullying at the federal level.

"As a 1990 graduate of Hempfield High School, I was very excited that a Gay/ Straight Alliance existed. I thought about how happy I would have been to have one here when I was in school," DeWalt says. The alliance is now four years old with more than 30 members.

The Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian & Transgender Lifestyle
Coming Out: Telling Your Family and Friends
By Bill Palmer

DeWalt says she's had many conversations with her colleagues about the GSA, all positive "though I know there are some people out there who are not in support of the club. Generally teachers feel it's great that we exist to support the students and, more importantly, to educate the student body and the staff of Hempfield."

When talking with students, DeWalt notes "a pretty good mix of positive and negative comments" on the GSA or lgbtq issues. For the most part, she finds that "if you address issues, questions or concerns head on with students, and explain both sides of something, they come to a better understanding." Consequently, she's seen a lot of Hempfield students "coming around" to a greater understanding."

Hempfield students know they are supported both by teachers and administration through the existence of the GSA, DeWalt points out. "They know problems that arise will be addressed. They don't have to worry and that takes a lot of stress away from them. They know that they can be who they are and not live their lives hiding in fear," she concludes.

An environment in which kids can be who they are important to Dr. James T. Sears, an expert consultant on the book series, who says safe environments involve a two-sided approach. "We need to have good classroom materials and dialogue with teachers and administrators."

"Schools are here to educate and to do that properly, we must provide comprehensive information to students," said Sears. "Currently we are mis-educating kids by providing a hetero-centric learning environment. We teach everything from a 'straight' perspective, fearing discussing alternative sexual details of history, literature, science, etc. will pollute the educational setting. By opening up the learning environment to include a lgbt perspective we can allow kids of all sexual and gender orientations to gain a greater acceptance for peer differences."

Sears advised the book series' senior editor on how to present information. "We clearly want to move away from a 'victimization' model to a model that normalizes sexuality and gender identity," he explains.

"We clearly want to move away from a 'victimization' model to a model that normalizes sexuality and gender identity,"
Dr. James T. Sears

Regarding their sexuality, Hempfield students know they are supported both by teachers and administration through the existence of the GSA, DeWalt points out. "They know problems that arise will be addressed. They don't have to worry and that takes a lot of stress away from them. They know that they can be who they are and not live their lives hiding in fear," she concludes.

The Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian & Transgender Lifestyle
Gay and Lesbian Role Models
By Jaime A. Seba

Bowling Anyone?

In its second full season, Strike Outs Bowling meets for its next round Sept. 12, 3 p.m. at Colony Park North, 1900 Pennsylvania Avenue, York. The league bowls every Sunday except Christmas and Easter.

Husbands Michael and Bobby Binko started the bowling club about a year ago. "We were tired of driving to Baltimore to the Out & About Bowling league, although they were invaluable in helping us get started. Closer to home there was nothing in this area that wasn't bar related," Bobby Binko says.

The two men approached a few local bowling center managers to pitch the idea and selected Colony Park North. "We did all of the start-up costs out of pocket to get the league going," Binko explains. The new group marched in last year's Central PA Pride Parade. This year they had festival booth.

"We were very pleased to have six teams to start up our first year," Binko says. The league has members from Lancaster, York, and Baltimore. Teams are made up of three members, any combination of men and/or women. "We have a pretty diverse group of folks that bowled last season and all but one, who moved, are returning for the 2010-2011 season. "For a group of strangers, everyone has become friends. There are many outside gatherings other than bowling like dinners, movies, practice bowling."

Binko also says "bowling is a sport and a great way to get some low impact exercise, even for those of us completely out of shape." The league is a handicap league which means that everyone starts with a level playing field. It doesn't matter if you're good or bad.

Weekly dues are $15 per bowler, including fees, banquet and prize funds. Every bowler receives prize money regardless of what place they finish in. "Our end of season banquet was a great way for everyone to come together for a nice dinner and celebrate," Binko says. The league also has a weekly 50/50 jackpot in which the winner takes half and the other half goes to a charity of the league's choosing. Last season's six teams raised more than $300 for the American Diabetes Foundation, the charity the league selected.

The setting is comfortable. "It may not be a 'bar', but we had absolutely no issues last year. It's a bowling center, so there is a mix of folks. The center was happy to advertise in-house for our league and gave us promotional items (free games) to try to expand the league," Binko says. There's a pub attached to the bowling center, football is on the screen (it is Sunday after all), so bowlers can catch the game in between frames and have an adult beverage

Info: Weekly bowling dues are $15 per bowler. Contact Bobby Binko, strikeoutsbowling@gmail.com, 717-993-9582, 443-695-0734

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publisher's note

With Pride Comes Responsibility

Frank Pizzoli

Last issue (July-August 2010) I wrote that we are a resilient people. That's true in more ways than we can count.

This issue I write about the responsibility that comes with rights. The words here reflect a summary of comments heard the day of Pride and afterward. We welcome readers' own thoughts on this and any subject in the form of a Letter to the Editor or a longer piece.

Every Pride event around the country is different and has its own history and flavor. I've said for years that lgbt folk are mostly like where they're from, where they grew up.

The gay thing comes on top of that. I think that's why the region's gay community pretty much reflects the area's conservative background. If all politics is local, so is all gay.

The "dress" comments floated around again this year.

"This is a family-oriented event. Why do they have to dress like that?" This meant in one or two layers of underwear, maybe nothing else, maybe a stingy top. "What makes you think we all want to see that?" one attendee asked.

Does being an "embracing" community, capable of accepting the diversity within our own ranks, mean anything goes? In public, at an event that strives to say to allies, sponsors, potential allies and sponsors, undecided folk and detractors: "We're okay. We're responsible citizens just like you?"

Is it common sense to conclude that the adage "There's a time and place for everything" does not mean that time and place exists 24/7? (Calm down. We're simply asking questions here. Annoying, huh? It's not a Political Correctness Test. Your answer is your own.)

This next summary of comments came late in the day as the all volunteer group bee-hived the grounds. Some volunteers work 12 months year-round. Some appear that day to offer a hand. "Look at this mess. Why can't they clean up after themselves!" said one volunteer. This complaint isn't a gay thing by the way. All kind of people attend the event. Clean is clean. Slob is slob.

How do I know the money collected for this good or service actually financially benefits Pride? Do they ever see the money?

The easy way to answer this question is to work with Pride organizers well in advance of the event. Ask for their consent to hold a fundraiser on behalf of Pride especially if you plan to use their logo. Yeah, yeah, queers love the "Gee kids, let's put on a show" last minute drama. Please save that thinking for something else, not Pride. Buy a clock and a calendar and figure it out. The web site is up all year round with contact information.

Same drill with any literature distributed at the event. All handouts must be approved by Pride and goes through the same scrutiny and rules as all vendors do. Yes, it is any person or organization's First Amendment Right to say or express whatever they want. That same right does not include the intentional disruption of another person's or organization's right to Free Speech.

No, there was no disruption of anyone's right to free speech at this year's event (that I know of). We're just splainin' our position Lucy, which is the purpose of an Editorial Page. In our News Pages we tell readers what happened from both or many sides. Newspapers don't make news. We report it.

If you're upset over something, an organization, an event or turn of events, write a Letter to the Editor (or a longer piece). We'll publish your words but we don't take sides. If we have a thought or position on something, we'll express our view in an editorial. Like readers, newspapers are certainly allowed to have "opinions" as long as they are expressed in an editorial. It's not okay that we express our opinions in news stories.

We trust readers can, and will, make up their own minds after we do our job of reporting all sides of an issue.

Sometimes I think protestors (and occasionally one or another side of a news story) would like to make up everyone's mind for them.

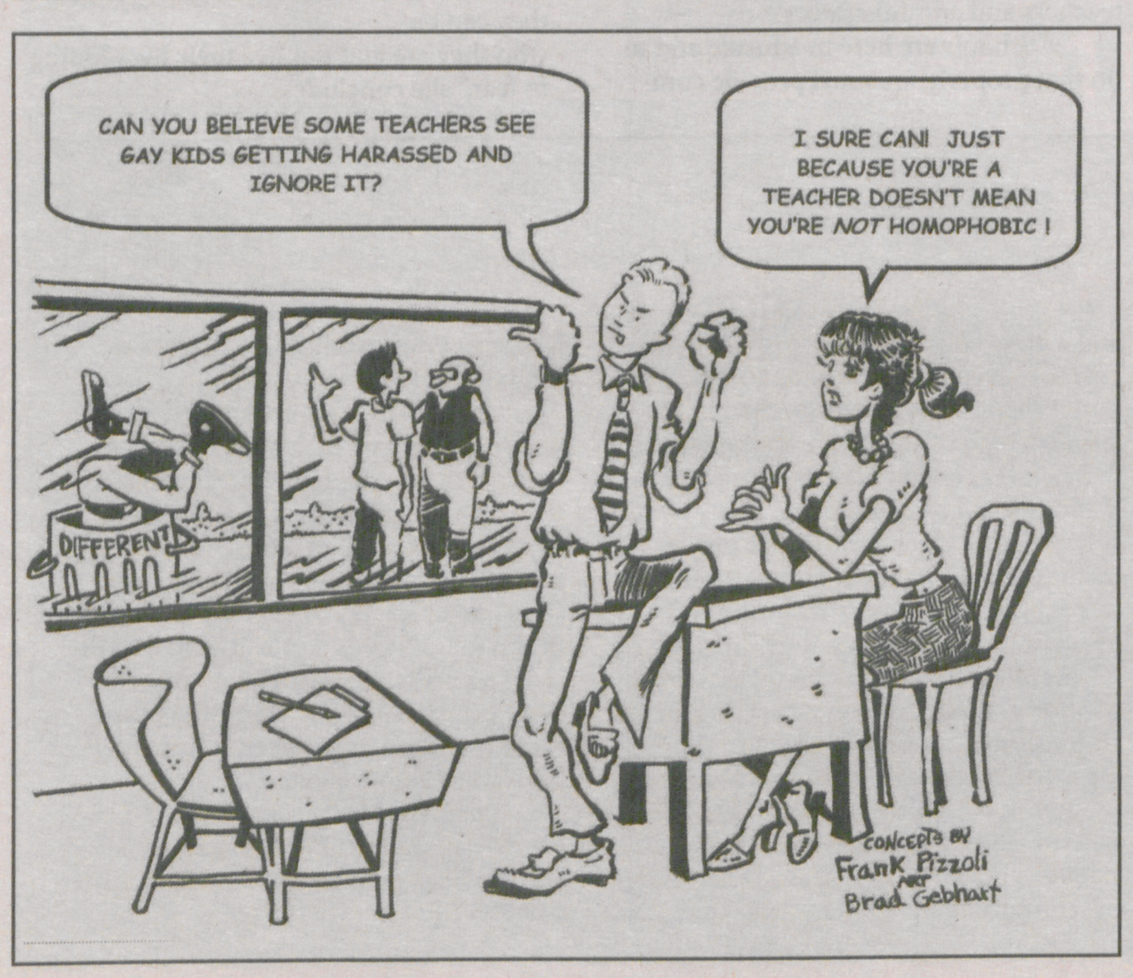
As they do every year, protestors shout their disagreement with granting lgbt civil rights in loud, but not completely obstructive, ways along the Parade route and near entrances. That is their right. It is our right to ignore them. It is our right to express opposite views. It is not our right to disrupt views with which we disagree. Protestors don't have that right either, although I'm sure they think they do.

If protesters get so loud as to disrupt the event itself, well that's a different story. That's why The Silent Witnesses, founded in Harrisburg, are so important in what they teach – you can express yourself but not taunt, disrupt or force your words on anyone. We don't like it when our opposition drowns out our free speech and we shouldn't aspire to drown out theirs either.

Oh, I did witness an irate attendee asking a city policeman on duty if protestors are allowed to scream and yell and carry signs at ArtFest or Kipona, events also held along the Susquehanna River. Probably, as long they don't disrupt. Like bank robber Willie Sutton who explained he robbed banks, 'cause that's where they keep the money, protestors with a hardened position on lgbt civil rights want to be where we are.

Free Speech is what makes this country great – even when you disagree. Stealing doesn't make the country great.

The official count is that three Rainbow Flags were stolen this year. In recent years the flags were replaced – with the original colors intact – with donations and fundraisers held by community volunteers. Anyone want to donate money for their replacement?



voice box

From thecentralvoice.ning.com on Lancaster County's Human Relations Commission:

Are we really one nation under God? If so, ask yourself: What would God do if -

He knew you were turning your back among his children? By not keeping the human right laws that's what you're doing, turning your back among his children!

Michele

E-mail your thoughts to Central VOICE posops@aol.com

PA Environmental Council Calls for Drilling Oversight

Submitted by PA Environmental Council

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) released a report calling for swift action on new regulations and greater oversight of drilling and extraction of natural gas from the Marcellus Shale formation, a major gas field that lies deep beneath much of Pennsylvania.

Called "Developing the Marcellus Shale," the report challenges state government and the natural gas industry to adopt more stringent standards for drilling and extraction to prevent the kind of environmental impacts that have occurred throughout Pennsylvania's industrial past.

The report also includes a number of specific legislative and regulatory changes that PEC believes should be made to minimize the risk of accidents, environmental damage, and public health hazards stemming from drilling operations.

Among the recommendations called for in the PEC report include the creation of a Marcellus Shale Development Task Force that would identify best practices in the industry and apply them to Marcellus Shale gas operations in Pennsylvania.

"The Marcellus Shale is a once-in-a-generation energy and economic opportunity for Pennsylvania," said PEC president Don Welsh. "We have a deep historical, political and fiduciary responsibility to get this right for the citizens of this Commonwealth as well as future generations who will inherit the environment currently entrusted to us."

The Marcellus Shale is a vast underground formation that contains an estimated 50-year supply of natural gas beneath the surface of Pennsylvania. However, the nature of these gas reserves are such that unconventional extraction methods are needed, which have environmental risks affecting local groundwater supplies, land use, habitat, and a number of other adverse impacts. Current regulations on oil and gas drilling in Pennsylvania were put in place at a time when conventional extraction techniques were commonly used.

There are currently an estimated 1,500 Marcellus Shale gas wells in Pennsylvania and industry officials predict an additional 35,000 to 50,000 more will be developed by 2030.

In the past year, Marcellus drilling operations have led to a number of accidents and reports of environmental contamination, including recent explosions at Marcellus drilling rigs in Penfield, Pennsylvania and Moundsville, West Virginia. This report takes aim at vulnerabilities in Pennsylvania's gas drilling and environmental protection laws that PEC says do not adequately address the extraordinary nature of the Marcellus Shale.

"The stakes in developing the Marcellus Shale – both economic and environmental – are far too great to take a 'business-as-usual' approach," said John Walliser, PEC's vice president of legal and governmental affairs. "There is broad consensus statewide that we have to do this right and the recommendations outlined in this report provide the starting point for doing just that."

"No one truly knows what the full extent of the local impacts from Marcellus Shale operations will be," said PEC's Walliser. "That's why it's critical to be mindful of the potential impacts and their associated costs now before drilling operations expand significantly. There's no reason why everyone – the industry, the Commonwealth, communities, and land owners – can't benefit from the development of this extraordinary resource provided we take the proper steps at the beginning to ensure we don't leave behind a legacy of environmental and economic destruction for future generations."

PA Nurses Support "RN Safe Staffing Act"

Submitted by PA State Nurses Association

Members of the PA State Nurses Association (PSNA) met with legislators in Washington as part of a "Lobby Day" event sponsored by the American Nurses Association. ANA represents 3.1 million registered nurses. More than 1,400 nurses from throughout the U.S. took part in the event.

One of PSNA's major messages was to ask policymakers to support the new "Registered Nurse Safe Staffing Act," which calls for hospitals to follow ANA's Principles for Nurse Staffing, among other provisions. The legislation calls for the development and implementation of valid, unit-by-unit nursing staffing plans based on each unit's unique circumstances and changing needs, not mandated ratios.

The measure was introduced in the U.S. Senate (S.) by Sen. Daniel Inouye (D-HI) and in the U.S. House of Representatives (H.R.) by Reps. Lois Capps (D-CA), Steven LaTourette (R-OH) and Ginny Brown-Waite (R-FL).

Other legislative priorities included safe patient handling and the Safe Chemicals Act, which would overhaul the way the federal government protects the public from toxic chemicals. ANA members also lobbied in support of the Home Health Care Planning Improvement Act, which allows APRNs to order home health services under Medicare.

"PSNA is the voice of nursing in the state of Pennsylvania, and we play an active role in speaking out on critical issues that impact our nation's healthcare system," said Wayne Reich, RN, BSN, CCRN, PSNA Member and ANA Delegate-in-Training. "That's why we are lobbying Congress, and calling on nurses to share their insights with legislators so we can achieve real reforms that enable us to provide the best possible care to patients and communities." Info: www.panurses.org.

Family Leave Act Applies

The U.S. Department of Labor has ruled that the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) will allow an employee to take unpaid leave to care for the children of the employee's same-sex partner, even when the employee hasn't legally adopted those children.

Estimates says that as many as 100,000 children in 50,000 families will now have access to a second parent's time to care for them as a result of the ruling. However, the ruling does not change the fact that an employee cannot now take unpaid leave under the FMLA to care for an ill same-sex partner.

The report notes that revising the federal law to allow employees to take unpaid leave to care for their same-sex partners would affect 215,000 families. Approximately 430,000 individuals would gain the ability to provide greater levels of care for their same-sex partners. The report uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey and the Bureau of Labor Statistics to calculate the numbers of families affected.

letters to the editor

Rare
The article "Gay Literature at Street Level" (July-Aug 2010) is terrific! It's such a pleasure to read an extended piece on lgbt lit, where you took your time covering various aspects of our literary culture. That is rare. Thank you for doing this.

Tony Valenzuela
Executive Director
Lambda Literary Foundation

Best Yet
July-Aug. Pride Issue is your best issue yet. One interesting article after another and so much information that I didn't even realize I wanted. It's truly a joy to sit back with your paper and soak up the ideas, reporting and stories.

Lew Maurer
Dauphin County Library System

Embrace
Many thanks to Central Voice for writing a wonderful article about Gallery Blu's "Pride" show. Our gallery is proud to embrace the many diverse communities within the city.

Christina, Owner
Gallery Blu

Thank you
Thanks again to Central Voice for doing a bang up job on our Pride Guide. I hope you folks enjoyed the festival.

Jeff Clouser, President
Central PA Pride Festival

PA Head Start Association Challenges USA Today

Blair Hyatt, executive director of the Pennsylvania Head Start Association (PHSA), expressed concern that an editorial appearing in USA Today fundamentally miss-represents Head Start programs and the need for additional Head Start funding appropriations.

PHSA is dismayed at the lack of substance and facts in the USA Today Editorial and feels that the author over-simplifies many complex issues and thus, unfairly questions the overall effectiveness of Head Start.

"The editorial overlooks the extensive research showing the effectiveness of Head Start and asserts Head Start needs fixing," says Jo Pepper, PHSA Board member and Head Start Director.

PHSA welcomes good faith efforts to discuss how Head Start can be improved.

Dialogue needs to be based on solid data and research. In an effort to show what the organization believes is a more complete and accurate description of Head Start and the issues raised in the editorial, they have posted rebuttal comments on the USA Today website.

The full rebuttal and additional resources and research can be viewed on the PHSA web site www.paheadstart.org in the Head Start in the News section. The organization is confident that readers will see the proven positive impact that Head Start has had, and continues to have, on the lives of low-income children and their families if they take time to read and educate themselves about Head Start and the research on Head Start programs.

Every year in Pennsylvania, more than 40,000 of the state's most vulnerable children and their families benefit from participating in a Head Start program.

transgender column

The Cake Rule

By Jeanine Ruhsam
TransCentralPA

My Daddy often told me that "you can't eat your cake, and have it too." That's a pretty powerful riddle of a rule for a willful little boy child who was sure he was a girl.

I've spent most of my life trying to disprove Daddy's Cake Rule. As a transgender woman, that's an everyday task, whether I like it or not. It's a real struggle for most of us trans people.

"Are you really a woman?" I've been asked. "I am not sure", I respond, "but I do know that I'm not really a man". Ultimately the Binary Cake Rule coerces us into choosing to "be" one or the other gender, when in reality we are both. The act of choosing one requires the killing of the other, and that can be expensive, painful and mentally damaging.

Many of us transgender people tire of the struggle and retire from the quest, the majority choosing the gender other than that matching our natal physical sex. It's not an easy undertaking, but the reward is that the struggle ends: We are simply one gender, in front of our mirror, in the world's eyes and legally.

Nikki Araguz is a transgender woman who lives in Wharton, TX, and recently became the widow of a fallen firefighter. She is much in the news now because of a lawsuit over the death benefit she is due to receive as Mr. Araguz's wife; the suit was brought by the ex-wife and parents of Nikki's husband, who want the money, and claim they are due it because Nikki is "not really" a female, and therefore they claim the marriage is invalid. Thus, Nikki went through all that pain and expense to transform her body so she could conform, changed her legal ID (she even ran for mayor of the town of 10,000), got a marriage license, was married and seemingly was a good wife …and now she's supposed to again be a he, and since Texas allows marriage only between opposite sexes, she's not legally his wife?

Nikki's current plight kind of messes up the coping mechanism we trans people have bought in to. How many hurdles must we leap? It seems there's always one more that will trip us on our face. True equality is just that…and that means, among the many fronts in the fight, that the freedom to marry movement must succeed.

Maybe Daddy was generous with his Cake Rule: Nikki couldn't even keep her wedding cake that she sacrificed so much for.

TransCentralPA (Transgender Education Association of Central PA) is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit charitable organization serving the community since 1989. The organization is dedicated to promoting acceptance of transgender people through education and visibility.

Historic Harrisburg Association is poised for development as the historic preservation organization's grant committee meets. Standing, from left, executive director John Campbell, Thomas Robel, and Christopher Wonders. Seated is Josh Good. Not pictured are Derek Dilks, Chris Deitz, and Central Voice founding publisher and editor Frank Pizzoli.

Elizabeth Mullaugh Heads Community Center Coalition

By Frank Pizzoli

"A society's failure to value people of different identities invariably produces economic and cultural stagnation, as well as marking that society with a deep moral stain," says well-known attorney Elizabeth "Bebe" Mullaugh, recently elected volunteer board president of LGBT Community Center Coalition for the remainder of 2010.

Mullaugh takes over following the recent departure of board president Ted Martin who was named executive director of EqualityPA. The center board is now searching for their first executive director expected to be in place by mid-October.

Mullaugh is passionate about her support of lgbt issues. "Repressive societies impose conformity at the expense of creativity and individual initiative, while open societies value the strength in diversity and inclusion," she points out. Her interest in advancing a civil rights agenda for lesbians, gays, transgender and bisexual people is selfish she says. "I want to live in a society that supports all of its citizenry and celebrates its differences."

The region's lgbt community and the community-at-large can best assist the center by getting involved. Last month the center group began reinvigorating their committees to improve and expand programs, events and other initiatives. "These panels will address issues facing all members of our community, including, women and transgender persons, our aging populations and those with mental health needs," Mullaugh says.

She encourages the community to get directly involved to develop diverse and valuable programs around health and wellness, cultural experiences and advocacy efforts.

The center will also focus on new efforts to support youth leadership development within the region. The effort will unfold through youth program Common Roads, affiliated with the center, and now almost 20 years old. "We'll be working with many dynamic young leaders in our region to encourage and foster the next generation of lgbt advocates," Mullaugh says.

Info: Newsletter sign up for updates at www.centralpalgbtcenter.org.

Bebe Mullaugh
Born in Pittsburgh Sept. 11, 1968
B.A., Economics, Boston College, 1991
J.D., University of Pittsburgh School of Law, 1995
Midtown Harrisburg resident since 1995
Attorney with McNees Wallace & Nurick LLC, specializing in estate planning, tax and business succession planning
Board service with SCAAN (South Central AIDS Assistance Network), Harrisburg Young Professionals, Harrisburg Parks Partnership, and Concertante
Served on LGBT Community Center Coalition Board since November, 2006

York events

September 24, 6-10 p.m. -
Harley Open House, Continental Square, Downtown York City
This street party surrounding the Harley Open House weekend features a 2,000 motorcycle parade, live entertainment on three stages, and food vendors. York. Scheduled entertainment TBA.

October 2 -
National Alliance on Mental Illness PA York County
140 Roosevelt Ave. Suite 200 York, PA 17401. Contact:Rose Alberghini phone: 717-848-3784; ralberghini@nami.org.

Spaghetti Dinner Benefits Loaves of Love

Harris St. United Methodist Church, Harrisburg, will host a "Spaghetti Fundraising Dinner" Sat., Sept. 18 from 4:30 – 7 p.m. All proceeds benefit Loaves of Love, an food pantry that helps people living with HIV/AIDS. Donation is $6 for adults, $4 for children 6 to 12, and under 5 eat free. Spaghetti, salad and dessert included. Meatless and meatball sauces available.

Susquehanna Service Dog: *Puppy Raisers Needed*

Susquehanna Service Dogs needs Puppy Raisers for wonderful Labrador retriever puppies that will grow and be trained to become service or hearing dogs in support of adults and children with disabilities.

Susquehanna Service Dogs (SSD), a program of Keystone Children & Family Services, breeds, raises, trains and places assistance dogs to support individuals with disabilities. An assistance dog may: pull a manual wheelchair, open a door, retrieve items, alert to sounds, offer balance help, or perform other tasks to increase a person's independence and ability to be involved in their community.

SSD Puppy Raisers are the amazing and irreplaceable volunteers who raise these "service-dogs-to-be" from the age of eight weeks preparing them for advanced training at 15 to 18 months. Puppy Raisers provide a safe and loving environment, healthy routines, basic training and socialization opportunities. Of course all of this is done under the guidance of a SSD Trainer. Puppy Raisers are asked to attend 2 to 4 training sessions per month located in the Harrisburg area. Training includes instruction classes, lectures and outings to various public arenas.

SSD provides the puppy raiser with puppy, crate, bowl, leash, collar with ID tag, harness, annual dog license, veterinary care, training advice and puppy sitters. The puppy raiser provides a positive environment, enthusiasm for training, transport to vet appointments and a good quality dog food. Your puppy becomes part of your family and your life for the 12 to 18 months you guide them toward success as a service or therapy dog. You are encouraged to take the puppy with you everywhere. Your puppy can accompany you to work, to the grocery store, to church, etc. They will follow the routine of your life just as they will do when they are partnered with their lucky person. Service dogs are permitted in all public places by law just as Seeing Eye dogs are. What fun you will have and just think of all the things you will learn.

Please consider letting a puppy into your life for the good of others and for your family. It is an amazing, wonderful experience. Past Puppy Raisers are available to consult with you in making your decision.

Those interested in this incredibly rewarding volunteer opportunity please go to our website: www.keystonehumansevices.org/ssd and fill out an application to become a volunteer. Upon receiving this application, SSD will contact you to set up an interview at your home. Upon approval, you will be pulled quickly into the never dull world of puppy rising.

Susquehanna Service Dogs is a program of Keystone Children & Family Services a not for profit organization. SSD receives some funding as a program of the United Way of the Capital Region, the balance of the funds to operate this life changing work is provided though donations by the caring public.

New York Passes Dignity for All Students Act

New York State has passed its first statewide protections based on gender identity and expression. The New York State Senate passed the Dignity for All Students Act 58-3. The act was had already been passed by the Assembly and now heads to Governor Paterson's desk for signature.

Surveys indicate that New York lgbt students face bullying and harassment. One recent survey conducted by GLSEN found that 79% had been verbally harassed in the past year because of their sexual orientation and 62% had been verbally harassed because of how they expressed their gender.

The act would allow teachers, parents, students, and school administrators to address bullying and bias-related behavior of all kinds that interfere with student safety and learning. The act will also allow for development of rules to prevent and respond to discriminatory harassment and hate violence by establishing teacher, staff and administrative training guidelines. Discrimination awareness will be incorporated into civility and character education curricula. Incidents of bias harassment will have to be reported to the state education department.

In addition to protecting students on the basis of gender identity and expression, the act protects students on the basis of sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, weight and disability.

Lebanon Valley College Hosts Events

Chile Earthquake Relief Banquet
Sept. 19, 5 p.m. - Mund College Center
Enjoy a Chilean meal and music as well as some Cueca dancing while learning about local efforts to rebuild homes in that country. The event, which kicks off LVC's observance of Hispanic Heritage month, will raise funds for the rebuilding of homes in Chile. Admission: $12/General; $30/Family w/children. LVC students may attend for meal exchange. To register, call 867-6135 by Sept. 14. Seating limited.

Sierra Leone Cultural Dessert
Oct. 2, 7 p.m.
Mund College Center
Enjoy Sierra Leonean dessert as well as live music and cultural dancing while learning about local efforts to support that country from visiting delegates. Admission: $7/General; $20/Family w/children. LVC students may attend without charge. To register, call 867-6135 by Sept. 14. Seating limited.

Lancaster events

September 4
Labor Day Weekend/ Demolition Derby Finals - Buck Motorsports Park, 900 Lancaster Pike, Willow Street, PA 17566 (PO Box 8289, Lancaster, PA 17604), 717-859-4244.

October 8/9
A Time of Harvest (Fall Harvest Days) - Rough & Tumble Engineers Historical Assoc., 4977 Lincoln Hwy. East (Route 30), Kinzers, PA 17535, 717-442-4249.

October 29/30
Lancaster County Paranormal Tour - Lancaster County Tours, 888-999-4479 or 888-824-3763. Unexplained Stories of Lancaster County's Past Uncovered on Halloween Weekend. Make way for a tour filled with mystery, trickery, treats and lots of fun. This tour is not for the faint of heart! Hosted by The Artist's Inn and Harvest Moon B&B.

HIV+ and Sexually Active?

Sexuality does not have to end with an HIV diagnosis. AIDS Community Alliance offers supportive educational programs to address the needs of men and women living with HIV.

- **Healthy Relationships**
  A five-part workshop that provides the tools to decrease the stress around disclosure to family, friends and sex partners.
- **Living Well Seminars**
  Interactive discussion groups on topics such as:
  - *Safer Sex 101*
  - *Viral Load & Risk Reduction*
  - *Positive/Negative Relationships*
- **Individual and Couples Consultations**
  One-on-one sessions to get the answers you want regarding HIV, sex and risk-reduction.
- **HIV Testing for Partners**

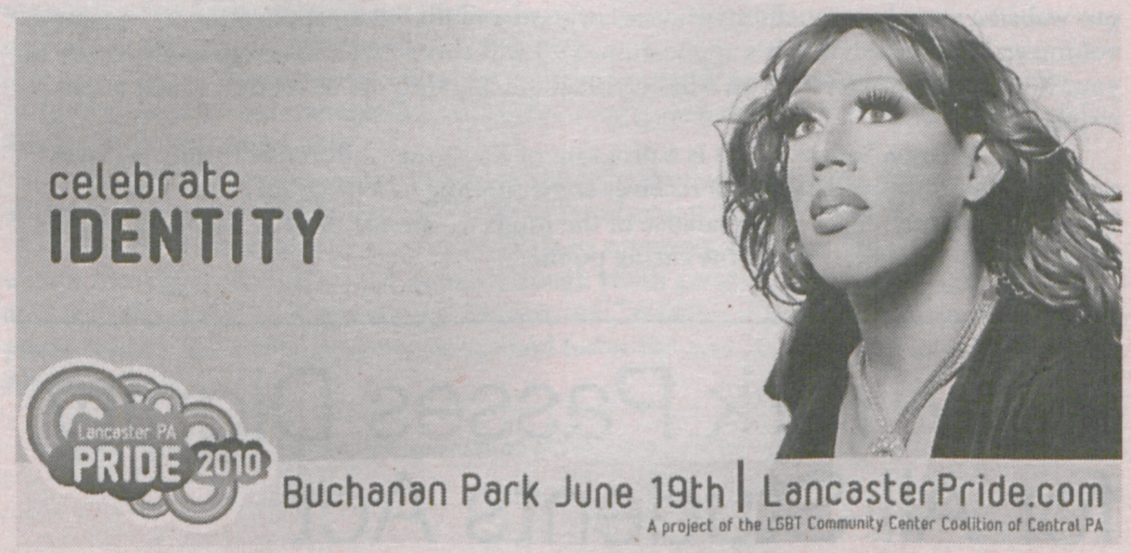
AIDS Community Alliance of South Central PA

All services are free and confidential. For more information about the program that is right for you, please call 1.800.867.1550.

www.ACA-PA.com

Lancaster Pride Launched Billboards

Only three years old but setting trends in educating the public about lgbt civil rights, Lancaster Pride this year launched a 16-image series of billboard ads. The goal of the ads was to show the diversity of the region's community.



National Gay & Lesbian Chamber Meets with Argentinean President

Just minutes after signing same-sex marriage into law late July, Argentina's President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner hosted a gathering of media and lgbt and human rights supporters, including representatives from the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC).

Chamber co-founders Justin Nelson and Chance Mitchell were two of the eight guests invited to speak with President Fernández de Kirchner following the landmark bill signing. Other guests included Pablo de Luca and Gustavo Noguero, the co-founders of Argentina's LGBT Chamber of Commerce; Bob Witeck, owner of LGBT-certified Witeck-Combs Communications; and Michael Luongo, an American journalist who lives in both the U.S. and Argentina.

"President Fernández de Kirchner seemed very interested in learning about the U.S. lgbt community and how newly legalized same-sex marriages might impact cultural tourism between our nations," Nelson said. "LGBT travelers from the United States spend more than $65 million a year on tourism, so this new law could encourage travel to the area."

Locally, Russell A. Boggs, president of The Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, supports the type of meeting the national chamber had with Argentinean officials. "I would love to see meetings like this take place in each of the 50 states," he says. "The lgbt business community and its allied businesses are open for business. Equality is good for business as well as just the right thing to do."

The private meeting, arranged by tourism minister Enrique Meyer, took place during the first ever American lgbt trade mission, the NGLCC South American Business and Cultural Exchange. During the trip, a small group of lgbt business leaders and NGLCC representatives met with top government officials, industry leaders, importers and Argentine entrepreneurs for six days of meetings and special events in Mendoza.

"We're incredibly encouraged by our visit with President Fernández de Kirchner We're glad to see Argentina support human and lgbt rights and legalize same-sex marriages in her country. She called on this law to set an example for the rest of the region and the world, and we strongly echo that sentiment."

Servicemembers United Action Fund Launched

Servicemembers United, the nation's largest organization of gay and lesbian troops and veterans, announced today that it has incorporated and launched a new 501c4 affiliated organization called the Servicemembers United Action Fund.

The new affiliate will take over and expand Servicemembers United's grassroots organizing work and will also develop and launch a series of web and television ads on the topic of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell", among other targeted activities.

"We are very excited and proud to be launching the first 501c4 affiliate organization dedicated to the 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' issue," said Alexander Nicholson, executive director of Servicemembers United and a former U.S. Army interrogator who was discharged under DADT. "This represents another big step forward for the gay military and veteran community and another weapon in our community's arsenal as we move into a critical period for the DADT issue."

Organizations that are organized under section 501c4 of the Internal Revenue Code are allowed to engage in unlimited lobbying activity, an important distinction. Servicemembers United, a 501c3 organization, will continue and expand its mission to educate the public about issues that impact gay and lesbian troops and veterans and to built a strong and vibrant gay military community for the post-DADT era.

FAB

Fall Achievement Benefit

On Oct. 16, the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central PA will host its annual Fall Achievement Benefit (FAB) at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center.

This year's Black Tie event will feature a Red Carpet entrance leading attendees into an atmosphere reminiscent of a 1940s Supper Club. The ambience in the VIP lounge will have the feel of a classic lounge like the Club El Morocco of 1940s New York City.

A Standards Band, featuring lead vocalist Lindsay Bretz, will delight the crowd with sounds from the era. Soft lighting, graceful flowers, and sensual music in a hazy atmosphere will transform the Great American Hall at the Hershey Lodge into an elegant 1940s Supper Club experience. The color theme for FAB, 2010 is "Red, Black, and White."

The VIP ticket holder Cocktail Reception begins at 6:30 p.m. The CLASSIC ticket holder reception will begins at 7 p.m. in the Lobby of the Great American Hall. Dinner is scheduled for 8 p.m. followed by dancing to the sounds of a high energy DJ until 1 a.m. The entire evening will include fine dining, great wine, and music. The evening promises to transport you back to a time when clubbing was the ultimate experience!

Mike Greenwald, formerly of WITF, will emcee the evening's program which will include testimonials from

continued on page 13

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New cases of syphilis have spiked in Lancaster, Harrisburg and York.
Many of the new infections have been among gay/bi men, as well as HIV+ men.

You can get syphilis from having anal, oral or vaginal sex with someone who already has it. Symptoms can include a sore, but not everyone gets noticeable symptoms.

Condoms can prevent transmission.

Get Tested!

For more information and locations where you can access free, confidential syphilis screenings, call 1.800.867.1550 or visit www.ACA-PA.com/lgbthealth.

LGBT HEALTH INITIATIVE

The LGBT Health Initiative of AIDS Community Alliance works to assure and promote high-quality health services and education programming designed to meet the unique health needs of the LGBT community. For more information please call 1.800.867.1550 or visit www.ACA-PA.com/lgbthealth.

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Phila Art Scene

DaVinci Art Alliance

Dating back to 1931 when founded by 17 prominent Philadelphia artists, the nonprofit Da Vinci Art Alliance is located at 704 Catharine Street (diagonally across the street from Fleisher Art Memorial) in South Philadelphia. The Alliance encompasses all forms of art and artists. The latest theme exhibit "Seven" asked artists to work with the number 7.

Winner of the coveted "Da Vinci Gold Medal" bestowed for Best in Show at the Alliance's annual members' show is Peter Seidel, left, and DaVinci Art Alliance President, Dr. Debra Miller.

Artist Anna Pizzoli alongside her "Shiva method" painting of seven angels ascending. She studied the rare method with Smithsonian-collected artist Chester Snowdon when they both lived in Houston.

Candy Darling

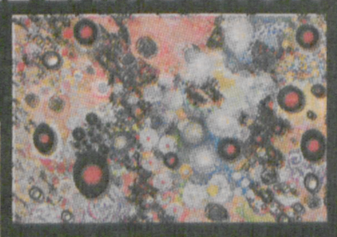
Who hasn't heard Lou Reed's song "Walk on the Wild Side" written about Candy Darling?

The life of Warhol Superstar, Candy Darling, is revealed in "Beautiful Darling: The Life And Times Of

continued on next page >

ART ASSOCIATION OF HARRISBURG presents

ARTIST INVITATIONAL EXHIBITION
October 22-November 24
Opening Reception
Friday, October 22
5-8 pm
Music by Old Time Burials



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22ND ANNUAL HARRISBURG GALLERY WALK
Sunday, September 12
11 am-6 pm

***

FALL MEMBERSHIP EXHIBITION
"The Green Zone"
September 12-October 14

***

FALL ART CLASSES FOR YOUTH AND ADULTS
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Candy Darling, Andy Warhol Superstar". Top photo: lifelong Candy Darling friend Jeremiah Newton, executor of her estate. Bottom photo: Left, executive producer Michael Newman, his hairdresser mother, Lorraine Brooks, who befriended Candy (Jimmy Slattery) as a school boy, and associate producer Meg Newman. *See Trailer @ http://www.beautifuldarling.com/trailer-beautiful.html*

QFest

Harrisburg film lovers flocked to QFest, a 10-day lgbt film festival.

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All proceeds benefit the Central Pennsylvania Animal Alliance, a 501(c)(3) non profit organization

Chamber Mixer

Posh Gallery co-owners Dennis Martin and Seth Hamill hosted The Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber last month. *See story on the gallery on Page 14.*

"Didn't get yer tickets yet? Well, Good Lord, why not?!?"

Mama Look-alike contest... details online!

Al Jarreau* Sat., Oct. 2 • 7:30pm
Media sponsor: Smooth Jazz 92.7

Vicki Lawrence and Mama:* A Two-Woman Show Thu., Oct. 14 • 7:30pm

In association with BRE Presents
Get the Led Out Sat., Oct. 16 • 7:30pm

Forever Plaid Sun., Oct. 17 • 4:00pm

Capitol Steps* Thu., Oct. 21 • 7:30pm

CapLive presents... The Felice Brothers
Thu., Oct. 21 • 8:00pm
Sponsored by: Production Express, Inc. & Fresh York

In association with BRE Presents
An Evening with Jethro Tull's Ian Anderson
Sat., Oct. 23 • 7:30pm

In association with BRE Presents
Kansas Fri., Oct. 29 • 7:30pm

Boyz II Men Sat., Nov. 13 • 7:30pm
Media sponsors: Smooth Jazz 92.7, 101 The Rose

The Travelin' McCourys*
Fri., Nov. 19 • 7:30pm Media sponsor: WITF-FM 89.5

CapLive presents...
Hoots & Hellmouth
Sat., Nov. 20 • 8:00pm
Sponsored by: Production Express, Inc. & Fresh York

* Ask about our pre-show dinner!

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See complete schedule at strandcapitol.org

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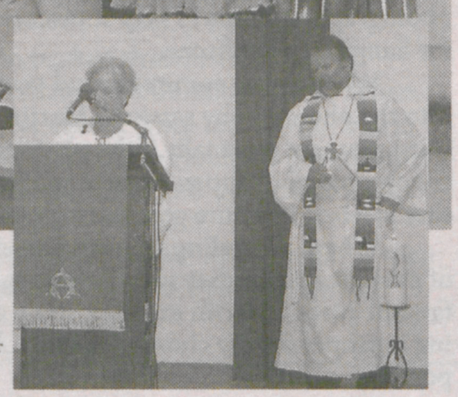
Spirits United Gathers

As the official close out to the region's annual Pride celebration, Spirits United Interfaith Service was host this year by Metropolitan Community Church, Harrisburg. The ecumenical service brings together various faith traditions.

The Rabbi and Cantor from Temple Beth Shalom open the interfaith gathering with the sounding of the shofar.

Voices from MCC of the Spirit, the Womyn's and Men's Choruses share the gift of music.



Rev. John Ward-Diorio and Shirley Keith-Knox of St. Paul's United Church of Christ.

Marlene Kanuck, Spirit's United Service Coordinator, closes the event with an Interfaith Blessing.

Shuso Lauren Marshall from the Blue Mountain Lotus Society leads a call to mindfulness.

FAB cont'd

participants involved with Common Roads, the youth program affiliated with the LGBT Community Center Coalition.

The evening's highlight is the presentation of the 2010 FAB Award honoring those who have made important contributions to the economic, political, cultural, spiritual and social progress of LGBT causes within our region.

The LGBT Community Center Coalition is a volunteer-led effort to create a regionally representative community center that is both a location and a unifying point for central Pennsylvania's large, diverse and multi-county lgbt population. The mission of the coalition is to create common ground for the lgbt community and allies in the region by providing services through spiritual, educational and cultural activities that foster wholeness.

Tickets for FAB will be available in September and may be obtained at www.centralpalgbtcenter.org only. The CLASSIC ticket cost is $100 and the VIP ticket cost is $200.

The FAB Committee is actively recruiting Table Captains. They collect a group of ten attendees to share a table for the evening. If you are interested in being a Table Captain, contact Alexander.Reber@gmail.com.

If you are unable to attend FAB and would like to make a monetary contribution toward the cause, contact lmarven@centralpalgbtcenter.org.

York Little Theatre New Season Announced

York Little Theatre announces 2010-11 Season that features character studies, satires, children's stories, blockbuster musicals, adventure, suspense, and powerful, edgy pieces.

The schedule for the 2010-11 Season includes season opener, 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, Broadway's musical comedy by William Finn and Rachel Sheinkin which introduces six preteen misfits desperate to win the spelling bee of their lives. It runs from September 24 – October 2.

The Children's Series will begin with Sherlock Holmes and the Baker Street Irregulars, October 29 – November 7.

Andrew Lloyd Webber's beloved musical, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat runs December 3 – 19 and tells the biblical story of Joseph, favorite son of Jacob, who is sold into slavery by eleven jealous brothers.

YLT rings in the New Year with the first of its Studio Series of plays, The Shape of Things, a drama by Neil LaBute. January 14 – 21, 2011. February 11 – 21, 2011, YLT presents The Top Secret Princess Detective Agency, a Children's Series production.

Blood Brothers, a musical by Willy Russel, next in the Studio Series, runs March 18 – 27, 2011.

Frederick Knott's classic thriller, Wait Until Dark, runs May 27 – June 5, 2011.

The Adventures of Zorro runs June 24 – July 3, 2011.

The 2011 Season closes with the hit musical, Rent, by Jonathan Larson, which runs July 29 – August 14 and is about a group of disjointed young artists who struggle to survive and create under the shadows of capitalism, prejudice and the spread of AIDS.

Tickets: 717-854-5715, www.ylt.org.

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HERSHEY THEATRE

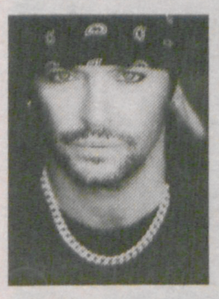
Jackson Browne with David Lindley
Sept. 9, 8 p.m.
$81.50 Processing fees apply
Singer-songwriter Jackson Browne will take to the road this summer with his band and longtime friend and musical co-conspirator David Lindley.
Accompanying Jackson Browne and David Lindley on tour will be Browne's band of almost 20 years: Kevin McCormick, Mark Goldenberg, Mauricio Lewak and Jeff Young. They're joined by members Chavonne Stewart and Alethea Mills, vocalists Browne met in 2001 when they were attending Washington Preparatory High School in South Los Angeles, singing in the school choir.
717-534-3405
1-800-745-3000
HersheyTheatre.com.

HERSHEY SYMPHONY

Hershey Symphony Presents "The Three Phantoms"
Sept. 10, 8 p.m.
$39.00 & $29.00
Tickets purchased at Hershey Theatre box office or 717-534-3405
"The Three Phantoms", accompanied by the Hershey Symphony Orchestra will haunt Hershey Theatre this fall. Three extraordinary performers join the symphony, that between them, have a wide range of roles and experience. Broadway, television, movie and concert audiences are familiar with their work, and now they pool their extensive experience in concert as… "The Three Phantoms".

WHITAKER CENTER

Eileen Ivers & Immigrant Soul
Sept. 26, 7:30 p.m.
Sunoco Performance Theatre
Dubbed by The Washington Post as "the future of the Celtic fiddle," Eileen Ivers has transformed the Irish fiddling tradition from a folk music staple, into an internationally-acclaimed art. As the nine-time All-Ireland Fiddle Champion, Ivers willingly takes responsibility to carry on the Irish music traditions, while continuing to perfect her own craft. Tickets $35, $29.50

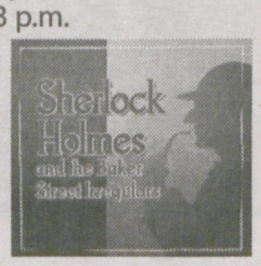


Bret Michaels Roses & Thorns World Tour 2010
Oct. 6, 8 p.m.
Whitaker Center Presents at the Forum, 8pm
Known as one of rock's most recognizable front men of the 80s, Bret Michaels continues to garner popularity and mainstream success of today. Aside from being a multi-platinum selling artist, actor/producer, reality star and winner of Celebrity Apprentice 3, Michaels is if nothing else, a true survivor. He has survived a lifelong battle as an insulin dependent diabetic, as well as a publicized near fatal car crash in 1994.
As the leader of legendary glam-metal rock band Poison, Michaels has sold 25 million records and scored an amazing 15 chart-busting Top 40 singles including, Talk Dirty to Me, Something to Believe In, Nothing But a Good Time, and the timeless No. 1 smash Every Rose Has its Thorn. The band continues to be one of the industry's top grossing concert attractions and 2006's 20 Years of Rock album, was a bona fide Top 20 Gold smash. Poison'D! (2007) is the band's most recent CD.
Tickets $75 (gold circle), $55, $40

YORK LITTLE THEATRE

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee
Sept.24/25/30 - Oct. 1/2 -7:30 p.m.
Sept. 26/Oct. 3 - 3 p.m.
Tickets $10 - $22
Hilarious Broadway musical comedy with 6 preteen misfits desperate to win the spelling bee of their lives.

Sherlock Holmes & the Baker Street Irregulars
Oct. 29/30, Nov. 5/6 – 7 p.m.
Oct. 30/31, Nov. 6/ 7 – 3 p.m.
Tickets $10



When the greatest detective finds himself under house arrest, he turns to a gang of street urchins to solve his mysteries.
York Little Theatre
27 S. Belmont St.
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717-854-5715
www.ylt.org

STRAND-CAPITAL THEATRE

Jr League - Laura Bush
Sept. 23, 7 p.m.
In celebration of the 80th year of the Junior League in York, the league presents "An Evening with Laura W. Bush."
As an educator and former first lady of Texas and the United States, Mrs. Laura Bush has a unique and wide-ranging perspective. She is actively involved in issues of national and global concern, with a particular emphasis on education, women's health and human rights.
Strand-Capitol Performing Arts Center, 50 N. George Street, York, PA 17401; Tickets: 717.846.1111.

PRIDE FESTIVAL OF CENTRAL PA
See Pride photos on pages 24 & 25

Posh Studio Offers Creative Photography

By Frank Pizzoli

Posh Studio co-owners Dennis Martin and Seth Hamill.

"As a child I always had an infatuation with photography," says Dennis Martin, co-owner with Seth Hamill of Lancaster's Posh Studio. He loved to take his mom's camera outside to photograph farm images. "I wanted to see how creative I could be with the camera."

Both Lancaster County natives, life and business partners Martin and Hammill live in Denver with a menagerie of rescued animals.

A Lancaster County native, Hamill has 10-plus years experience in sales, marketing, advertising and fundraising. He is marketing director for Posh Studio and Dennis Studio, both located in Lancaster County.

Martin grew up on a Lancaster County dairy farm and was graduated was Ephrata High School. He's studied under nationally renowned photographers Dave Zeiser, Al Gilbert, Andy and Letitia Torre, and Guy Grube at the Triangle Institute of Photography. He founded his first photography studio in 1986, known as Dennis Studio, and one year ago he founded Posh Studio as an extension to that business.

Posh Studio specializes in portraiture, but is not limited to that genre. "We offer publicity portraits, product photography, CD design, commercial photography, art photography as well as commitment ceremonies and special events," Martin says. They also design photography albums to help showcase special events and frame and deliver portraits ready for hanging in the home.

When doing commissioned portraits they "like to incorporate more intimate images into the photography session," Martin explains. "With the lgbt community this can be awkward moment especially if the photographer is judgmental." Posh Studio is a place where creative images happen without judgment. "Only after my clients are comfortable and at ease is when I capture genuine expressions that stir one's emotions."

When scheduling a creative session, "we sit down with clients to find out what type of portrait images they want, where to have images taken, in our studio or at home, a favorite place," Martin explains. They also determine the correct time of day so that lighting is proper for the chosen location. A lot of our clients love to have their pets in their portraits.

Martin encourages clients to "have a second person present. It is extremely important during a creative session that our clients feel safe and comfortable in order to develop the best natural expressions."

Martin and Hamill also give back to the community through donations of time to the region's Pride events and donations of photography to several non-profit organizations. Posh Studio is a member of The Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

Harrisburg Symphony Appoints Tara Simoncic Asst. Conductor

Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra recently appointed Tara Simoncic assistant conductor and music director of the Harrisburg Youth Symphony

"During my time as music director of the Norwalk Youth Symphony, I have built the program from four orchestras to six, adding a very successful mid-level orchestral winds training ensemble as well as a top level chamber orchestra that performs free concerts in the surrounding communities" says Simoncic.

Simoncic joins HSO from her current position with the Norwalk position where she previously served as conductor of their principal orchestra. While with the NYS she founded and conducted the Chamber Orchestra which collaborated with the Greenwich Ballet Academy.

Simoncic will assist Maestro Stuart Malina as his assistant conductor and become the new Harrisburg Youth Symphony music director, filling the position of the recently retired Dr. Ronald Schafer.

In addition to her NYS position, she was also the music director and conductor for the Histoire Chamber Orchestra, conductor of NYC's Flexible Orchestra, cover conductor for the Manhattan School of Music, and pre-concert lecturer and assistant conductor for the Greenwich (CT) Symphony Orchestra. She also served as assistant conductor for the Martha Graham Dance Company.

HR Commission end? (contd)

solutions to the city's financial woes. Both reports are available at harrisburgpa.gov. The plan does not cite a timetable for eliminating the city commission but does recommend that a senior city executive be appointed liaison to the state commission should elimination take effect.

Lancaster County also proposes to ship out complaints to the state agency. Four Pennsylvania counties operate their own human relations commissions, Allegheny, Erie, Philadelphia and Lancaster. The state is required to have a human relations commission, but local governments are not.

About 300 people filled a room in the Lancaster county administration building for the public hearing. There were estimates that another 200 people remained outside, unable to find space in the hearing room. The general community discussion has consolidated into three areas: (1) Is the county progressive enough to keep the commission? (2) Does the county-level service duplicate an existing state function? (3) Is the department affordable?

Lancaster commission director Robert C. Rush has told commissioners that the entity could cut its proposed spending for next year from $474,680 to $373,468. The county budget is about $150 million. The county's possible dropping of its human relations functions does not affect Lancaster City which operates its own such department.

"It was wonderful to see the overwhelming support for the Lancaster County Human Relations Commission, especially the strong support from business and religious leaders. I thought the testimony from Kim Smith of the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce and Industry was particularly strong. Her experience as a lawyer made clear the advantages and efficiencies of having a local commission. I'm hopeful that Commissioners Stuckey and Martin were listening," said Mark Stoner, former board chair of Lancaster City's Human Relations Commission.

"It is not a radical idea that civil rights should be protected locally. It is radical to propose eliminating local civil rights enforcement," Stoner said." A couple of hours before public hearing began about 250 people rallied in Binns Park, near the administration building. Those rallying voiced support for the commission with signs like "Don't rush to racism," "Don't turn back the clock," "We need local protection" and "I won't stand quietly by."

Adanjesus Marin, newly-elected board chair of Lancaster City Human Relation's Commission says "Commissioner Martin thought that by threatening to eliminate our local civil rights enforcement, he would be able to silence us. But what he inadvertently did was bring us together - black, brown, white, young and old, straight and gay - to defend everyone's civil rights."

"We were not surprised that in a hearing room so packed that the fire marshal wouldn't let anyone else in. Only six opponents to the country commission rose to spoke. Each one more incoherent than the other, garnering near silence from the crowd," Marin said. "Their arguments were a mix of rank homophobia and calls to eliminate government services altogether. Commissioner Martin should be ashamed that anti-government hate mongers are the only ones who have risen to stand on his side," he said.

"This is about defending our local access to basic human rights," Marin said. "If they take this away from us, we would be the only county in the history of Pennsylvania to move backwards in the arena of human rights."

Man Sues State Police (contd)

use of force, the state said in response to the allegations, but denied the officers' actions caused serious injuries. The response did not describe the force used by the officers.

The suit alleges Taylor participated in the beating, and that the troopers tazed him while he was handcuffed.

Keener claims the experience caused him to defecate in his pants and he was not allowed to clean up for 12 hours. The state admitted Keener defecated but denied forcing him to wait 12 hours to clean up. Police also said Keener was not tazed.

During the incident, the suit alleges Torkar repeatedly called Keener "faggot" and "queer," a claim the state denied.

According to Keener's complaint, he left Club XS, a gay bar in North York Borough, in the early morning hours of Aug. 31, 2008.

He said Trooper Torkar followed him for several miles and stopped Keener after he allegedly made an illegal left turn.

Torkar said he could smell marijuana coming from Keener's car and asked him to take a field sobriety test. Keener denied using pot and told Torkar he drank only one beer at the bar.

Police said Keener failed the sobriety test – Keener said he passed it – and took him to York Hospital for a blood test.

Keener later pleaded no contest to a DUI charge on the recommendation of his attorney and was sentenced to six months in the York County Prison, five of those on work release.

Blood test questioned

In the suit, Keener claims the blood test, which was eventually taken, supported his claim that he had only one drink the night of the incident. The state, in its response, said the blood test did not confirm Keener's claim.

On the way to the hospital, Keener said Torkar told him failure to submit to a blood test would trigger an automatic one-year license suspension and three days in jail. That conversation, Keener said, weighed on him as he debated whether to submit to the test.

"I knew I had marijuana a week before," he said in an interview. "I knew it stays in your system for a while so that would have been a DUI. I decided not to give blood because I didn't want that on my record.

"I thought I'd rather deal with that and decided I don't want to give a blood test," he said.

Michael Cole, a spokesman for the Human Rights Campaign, said Keener's allegations should be "thoroughly investigated" by the justice system.

"Police misconduct like that alleged is reprehensible and should never be tolerated," he said.

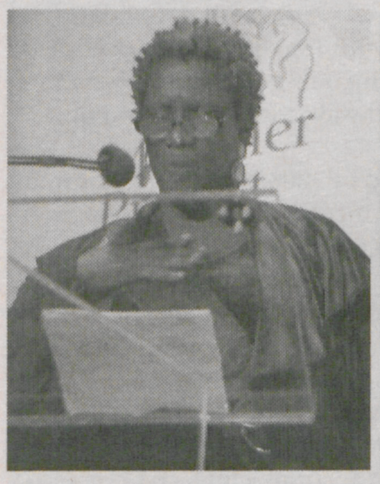
Likewise, Cole said, "we … encourage the police to examine their own procedures to ensure that everyone in their custody is always treated with dignity and respect."

PA Human Relations Commission Chairman Steve Glassman said the case underscores why "we need to have a state hate crimes law that includes lgbt people."

State Police Information Officer Lt. Myra Taylor told the Philadelphia Gay News an internal investigation would be conducted once the case was adjudicated.

The civil case is scheduled for trial in June 2011.

Lesbian Health Challenges (contd)



D Magrini

Leslie Calman

underserved population," Calman says.

Access to quality care for women with women is often hindered by social stigma and discrimination. "Additionally, as a group, lesbians are underinsured and are excluded from benefits such as the Family and Medical Leave Act, Social Security survivor benefits, protections given under Medicaid to legal spouses and (although President Obama's recent directive should change this) hospital visitation rights," Calman explains.

The AMA acknowledges that unrecognized homosexuality by the physician or the patient's reluctance to report his or her sexual orientation can lead to failure to screen, diagnose, or treat important medical problems.

One of the most important issues is breast cancer screening and treatment. "It has been hypothesized that lesbians are at two to three times greater risk for breast cancer than heterosexual women due to certain risk factors: higher rates of smoking, higher rates of obesity, and higher rates of binge alcohol consumption," Calman notes.

Not having had a pregnancy also increases a woman's chances of developing breast cancer. "Yet lesbians have lower rates of breast cancer screening: they are significantly more likely than heterosexual women to have never had a mammogram and to have waited longer since their last Pap test," Calman says, often because of stigma and discrimination. " Thus it is essential to educate lesbians about preventive care and healthy living, and to be able to provide them with comprehensive and stigma-free medical care."

The importance of cultural competency training as a tool to make health care more accessible and effective has been widely noted by medical professionals and bodies appointed by the U.S. Government. "Unfortunately, there is not yet widespread cultural competency by medical professionals working with lesbian and bisexual women," Calman says..

Originally, cultural competency referred to racial, ethnic and linguistic challenges. Over the past ten years, the concept has been extended to lgbt care as well. Sexual minorities are one of six U.S. population groups identified by the government in the document "Healthy People 2010" as suffering substantial health disparities. ACA uses the document to guide its programming on health issues.

Magrini says generally lesbians are at low risk of HIV infection. "However sex between women is not always safe sex and lesbians are just as vulnerable to certain sexually transmitted infections as women who have sex with men," she stresses. Therefore women need to know their risks and how to protect themselves and their partners.

The reality is sexual health risks have little to do with how a particular woman identifies and lots to do with what she does and how she does it. "It's important for everyone to have access the information to make informed choices about sex regardless of who their partners are or how many partners they have," Magrini says.

What can communities do to improve care for lesbian individuals and couples?

"A systematic approach to creating diverse community partnerships including agencies serving the lgbt population, with a mission to generate interest and action on a particular health issue, such as promoting smoking cessation, offers a successful model," Magrini says.

Shared community goals serve as a guide for developing a set of objectives that will measure actual progress for each segment of the community, within a specified amount of time, Magrini points out.

"Advocate and participate. Advocate for inclusion in research, clinical trails and for tailored interventions that respond to the populations needs," Magrini says. "On a personal level participate in creating health by promoting a culture recognizing the importance of healthy eating and physical activity. Adopting these personal changes can and do affect the community as a whole."

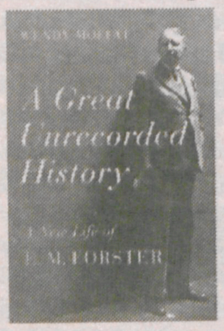
LGGT Health Initiative works to assure and promote high-quality health services, screenings and health education programs designed to meet the unique needs of the LGBT Community of South Central Pennsylvania. For more information on information please visit www.ACA-PA.com/lgbthealth or call 1.800.867.1550.

book review

From Serious to Sexy

By Lew Maurer, Library Services Administrator
Dauphin County Library System
Why not check out these intriguing new titles and one fabulous classic at your library this fall? And, check out why Lady Gaga likes libraries - http://www.lambdaliterary.org/features/videos-trailers/06/09/librarians-go-gaga-for-poker-face/#more-1440

A Great Unrecorded History, A New Life of E. M. Forster
By Wendy Moffat



Dickinson College professor, Wendy Moffat read from her new book and answered questions from a full house at Midtown Scholar Book Store on July 28. Insightful, surprising, thought-provoking and entertaining, as well as possessing an authentically enthusiastic and captivating style, Wendy is a smart homo's newest diva. You won't want to miss reading this revelatory work.

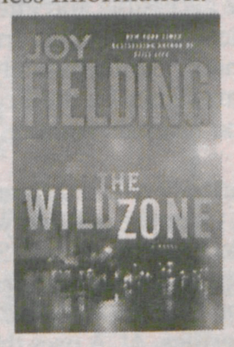
This biography-the first to focus on Forster's homosexuality-is the result of ten years of research by Moffat (English, Dickinson Coll.) that included interviews with the subject's friends. Forster (1879-1970) "came out" only posthumously with the 1970 publication of Maurice, an openly gay novel written decades earlier but circulated only among chosen associates because of the prevailing prejudice and laws against homosexuality in Britain. Thus Forster kept his orientation under wraps, especially from his mother, by whom he was dominated until her death when he was 66. After A Passage to India, published in 1924, he produced no more novels but left a body of gay writing that remained unpublished during his lifetime, while publicly he turned to lecturing and journalism. Moffat's book details a succession of gay relationships as well as Forster's lifelong association with King's College (Cambridge) and his travels in Egypt and India, which revealed the racism prevalent among his contemporaries....-Denise J. Stankovics, Vernon, CT Copyright 2010 Reed Business Information.

Maurice
By E.M. Forster

Set in the elegant Edwardian world of Cambridge undergraduate life, this story by a master novelist introduces us to Maurice Hall when he is fourteen. We follow him through public school and Cambridge, and on into his father's firm, Hill and Hall, Stock Brokers. In a highly structured society, Maurice is a conventional young man in almost every way, "stepping into the niche that England had prepared for him": except that his is homosexual. Written during 1913 and 1914, immediately after "Howards End," and not published until 1971, " Maurice" was ahead of its time in its theme and in its affirmation that love between men can be happy. "Happiness," Forster wrote, "is its keynote. In "Maurice" I tried to create a character who was completely unlike myself or what I supposed myself to be: someone handsome, healthy, bodily attractive, mentally torpid, not a bad businessman and rather a snob. Into this mixture I dropped an ingredient that puzzles him, wakes him up, torments him and finally saves him."

Insignificant Others
By Stephen McCauley

Narrator Richard and his partner, Conrad, are a well-adjusted gay couple living in Boston at "the end of the American Century" in McCauley's adroit latest (after Alternatives to Sex). They have an understanding that allows for the occasional infidelity, but when Richard realizes that Conrad's current fling may be luring him away, he begins to worry. It doesn't help that Richard is becoming infatuated with his own insignificant other, Benjamin, who leads a double life as a supposedly happily married father of two. Richard's problems, though, go well beyond his love life, and with a dry, caustic wit and the occasionally weighty social observation, he describes how he's coping with his own exercise addiction, his suspicious sister, a client at work who may or may not be on the brink of going crazy, a friend who can't bring himself to tell his wife about his health problems, and his deeply confused feelings about Conrad and Benjamin. But it's an unlikely alliance with Conrad's business partner and the slow unraveling of his problems that adds an unexpectedly and refreshingly sentimental dimension to this accomplished comedy. (June) Copyright 2010 Reed Business Information.



The Wild Zone
By Joy Fielding

The Wild Zone, a South Beach (Miami Beach, Fla.) bar filled with lusty men-specifically, charismatic personal trainer Jeff Rydell; his cute visiting half-brother, Will, a Princeton graduate student; and Jeff's married best friend, Tom Whitman, a dishonorably discharged Afghanistan war veteran with some serious problems-provides the starting point for bestseller Fielding's nonstop thrill ride. A sexy bar patron, Suzy Bigelow, inspires the trio to make a wager on who can bed her first, and they even ask Jeff's live-in girlfriend, a Wild Zone bartender, for help. Suzy chooses Will for a platonic date, which has some distinctly unpleasant repercussions that involve not only wide-eyed Will but desperate, gun-loving Tom, whose wife takes their children and files for divorce. Fielding (Still Life) combines a fast-paced plot with top-notch character development to create an atmosphere of brooding unease that explodes in a wonderfully wild resolution. (Feb.) Copyright 2009 Reed Business Information.

From left, Ted Martin, Equality PA; Ashley McLaughlin, Allies, Millersville State Univ., Jason Landau Goodman, Equality PA; Marion Simmons, Lincoln Univ. Gay/Straight Alliance; Louie Marven, LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central PA; Brian Sims, Equality PA.

Stonewall Uprising

About 60 people gathered at Harrisburg's Midtown Cinema Aug. 12 for a screening of the documentary film "Stonewall Uprising." The film was followed by a panel discussion on lgbt youth activism in the state. The event was sponsored by Equality PA and the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central Pennsylvania as an educational community event in response to an anti-gay marriage demonstration on the steps of the capital by the National Organization for Marriage the following day.

New Grant Funds Faith-based LGBT Initiatives

The LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central Pennsylvania has received a $9,000 grant from the E. Rhodes & Leona B. Carpenter Foundation to launch "Come Let Us Reason Together," an outreach and education program connecting faith-based communities and leaders with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) populations in central Pennsylvania.

"The aim of this project is to bring people together for dialogue," said Elizabeth Mullaugh, president of the LGBT Community Center. "There are so many misperceptions and stereotypes about LGBT individuals within faith-based communities. This project—the first of its kind in central Pennsylvania—will allow us to create opportunities for open and honest discussions in safe, supportive environments."

The grant will help fund three phases of the project: a clergy roundtable that will meet monthly to discuss LGBT issues and policies within their congregations; an education and film series that will focus on bridging the gap between faith-based and LGBT communities; and a resource library for LGBT people of faith.

Pastor Jim Brown of Market Square Presbyterian Church hails the grant "as a much needed stimulus for gathering groups from churches and other faith-based communities to talk 'with' rather than 'about' LGBT persons, many of whom have deep roots in our faith communities."

"Education and communication is the best way to eradicate hatred in our community," said Rabbi Peter Kessler of Temple Ohev Sholom. "I look forward to taking advantage of this initiative to discover new ways of helping our community learn more about the pathways to tolerance and understanding."

Formed in 2006, the LGBT Community Center's mission is to create common ground for the LGBT community and allies in central Pennsylvania by providing services through spiritual, educational and cultural activities. Programs include Common Roads, a youth education and advocacy program; Safe Zone training for schools, agencies and community organizations; monthly book clubs and community workshops; and CPLAN, a support and advocacy network for aging LGBT individuals.

The E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation was formed in 1975 and funds a wide range of faith-based initiatives, including projects that offer support to LGBT persons of faith or that ensure faith communities' understanding, affirmation, and inclusion.

For more information, contact Louie Marven, director of education and youth services, at 717-920-9534 or lmarven@centralpalgbtcenter.org.

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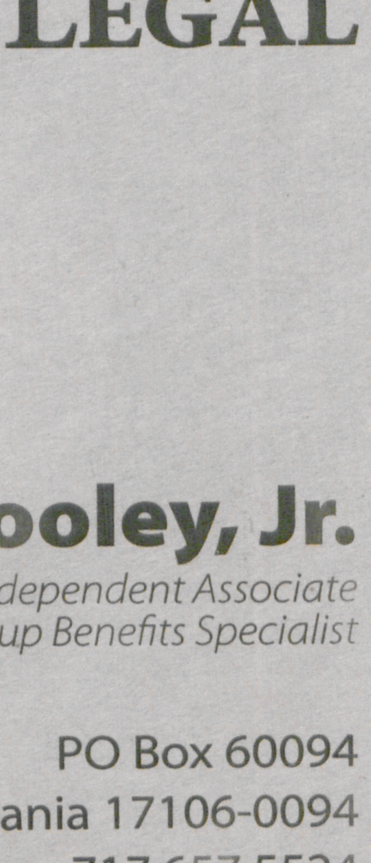

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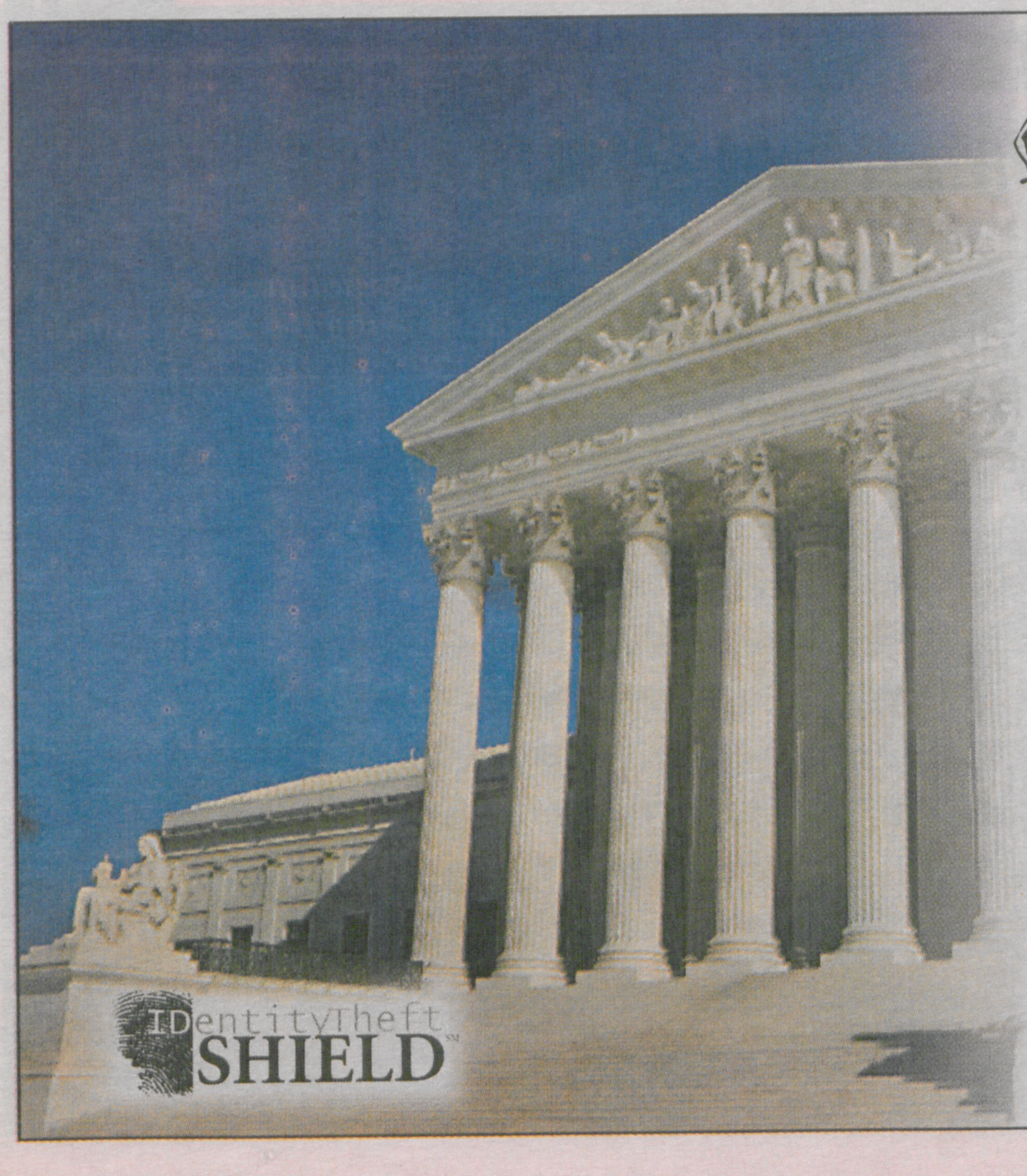

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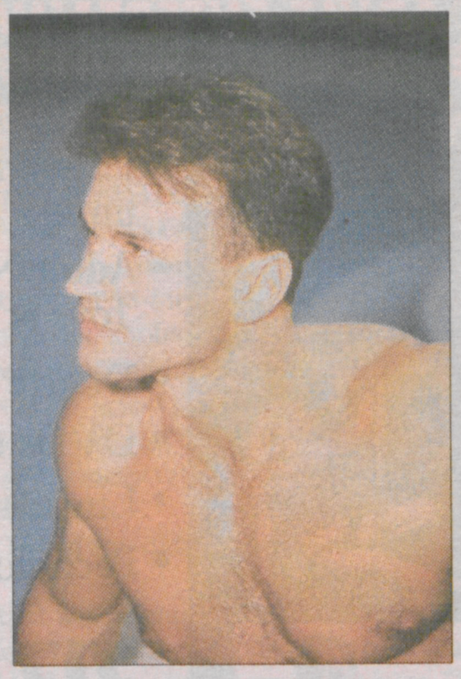

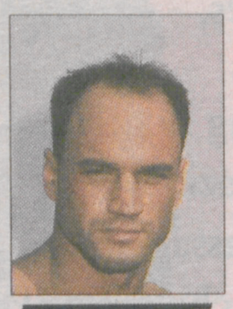

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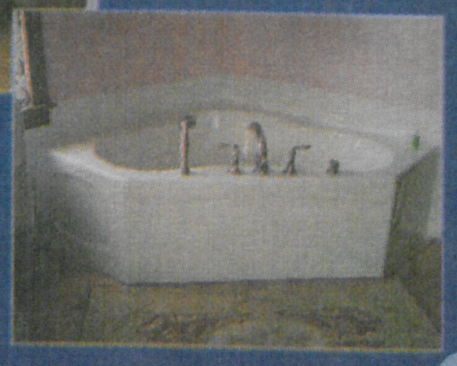

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Vicki Lawrence: Fresh, Funny and Ready

By Frank Pizzoli

"I just came from seeing Vicki Lawrence and Mama, and it's one of the funniest shows I've ever seen in my life," says a fan online. Lawrence's heart-felt reaction over the telephone reveals her nature: "That's really sweet, it really is," she said.

Genuine is the word Lawrence's demeanor brings to mind. "Sorry I couldn't reach you by phone yesterday," she said softly when we talked one day later after a mix up on time. How often does that happen with a celebrity?

Her two-part 90-minute show opens with Lawrence strolling down her autobiographical lane. "I've learned over the years what audiences want to know about me. How I got started, who I am as a person." The second part of her show is all "Mama," a character she perfected while a starring on the memorable "The Carol Burnett Show" (1967-1978).

Here's what you didn't know about Lawrence and Mama.

The part was originally scripted as a one-time character for Burnett. "Carol didn't feel the character. She thought I'd be better for it," Lawrence explains. "I drew on my then-mother-in-law and other personal experiences to develop the character." And develop it she did. The sharp-tongued matriarch, Thelma Harper, can tell a good joke. "She's my version of Chris Rock," Lawrence says laughing.

Lawrence was the only cast member, except for Burnett herself, who stayed on the show for the entire 11 seasons. Her ascension to become part of the Burnett company illustrates Lawrence's drive to succeed. She was hired for the show on the basis of a letter she had sent to Burnett and the producers. The letter contained a photograph of Lawrence that clearly showed her resemblance to Burnett. It was decided that Lawrence only needed a grey-blue wig and body padding to transform her into "Mama." Viewers didn't notice or care that no make-up was used to make her appear older, although she was young at the time.

Here's another showbiz item you didn't know.

Cher was offered the song that made Lawrence an award winning singer but her then-husband Sonny Bono had turned it down. Lawrence's #1 hit, "The Night the Lights Went Out in Georgia," was released in 1972 and sold over 2 million copies.

She released a disco album entitled Newborn Woman late in 1979. The album produced the minor disco hit "Don't Stop the Music" which was released as a disco single. Unfortunately the anti-disco backlash was in full swing when the album was released and the album and single failed to hit the charts.

After the Burnett show ended in 1978, Lawrence and her husband Al moved with their children to Maui in Hawaii but after a couple of years, returned to Los Angeles where they have remained. "We're a little family operation now. I travel with my husband and son. It's delightful," Lawrence says. And her show is funny!

Adam Arcuragi and The Lupine Chorale Society played at The Stage on Herr. The band's music is a mix of traditional-to Indie-folk, some Americana. Fans compare Arcuragi to Nick Drake, Bob Dylan, and Hank Williams. Photo by Brook Barnes.

coming out column

Queery: Break Up by Texting?

By Steven Petrow

Can I break up with my boyfriend by text?

Q: My boyfriend and I have been dating for about three months. He told me that he and his ex-partner broke up before we met, but I just found out that they're still having sex. I'm furious, but I'm not sure I could say everything I want to say to his face. I think that writing it down would enable me to get everything out. Is it OK to break up with him in an email or text?

A: No matter how much of a jerk or liar he may be, you owe it to him and to yourself to actually have a break-up conversation. Sure, it seems easier to dash off a snarky email or a snippy one-sentence text without looking him in the face. And indeed, breaking up by text, IM or even with a one-click relationship "status update" on Facebook is more and more prevalent. One recent study found that one in seven of us had been dumped by email or text. The truth is that getting the last word is not as important as trying to understand better what happened so that you can both find closure.

But before you do anything, I wonder whether you've made the mistake of equating a boyfriend with having a monogamous boyfriend. Until the two of you explicitly make that decision, don't assume that he is. Sometimes they go hand in hand; other times not.

Reach out to your guy and tell him you need to talk. You may be surprised what you find out. Even if nothing new comes of such a talk, at least by being clear and direct, you're less likely to have regrets later on about breaking up with him.

Will you be my domestic partner?

Q: Asking someone to become my "domestic partner" doesn't sound nearly as romantic to me as "Will you marry me?"Any thoughts on how to sex up this kind of proposal?

A: You're right, that phrase wouldn't really make me swoon. But just because the government is denying you the freedom to marry doesn't mean it controls how you express what's in your heart. There's no reason your commitment proposal shouldn't be special and memorable, whether it's a candlelit dinner at your favorite restaurant or a weekend away at a bucolic B&B. So put a little time and effort into the planning. Consider presenting a ring, if that suits you, and saying something like, "I wish we could marry, but since we can't, I hope we can be together forever. Will you have me?"

Who pays for dinner on a gay date?

Q: Even in 2010, with decades of openly gay dating under our community's collective belt, I still get confused when the dinner check arrives. What rule of thumb do you go by for what seems like an archaic conundrum but truly is not?

A: Wasn't life easier for everyone when the guy just paid for everything? Oh, right, that wouldn't work for two gay men or two lesbians on a date. That's why there's a great rule: "You invite, you pay." This is especially the case if you've chosen the restaurant as well as making the invitation. Also, consider these phrases as code for "I'll pay": "Please be my guest"; "It will be my treat"; "I'd like to invite you to join me…" and "Let me take you out to..."

Of course, it's good manners to offer to pay for yourself or contribute toward the tip, even when you know you're the guest. And it's wise to be prepared to pay your own way, because you never know. By the way, if your date does pay for you, remember that you're under no obligation to go out again, or to become horizontal.

Mommy dearest?

Q: What's the best way to refer to two women raising a child together? Are they both "moms," or do I call the biological parent something different from the adoptive parent? What do I put in the school newspaper when I write about "Jason's moms"? Do I refer to one as his mother and the other as his second mom, or his adoptive mom? I don't want to be disrespectful, just clear.

A: Let's assume that both women are the legal parents of the child – and whether that's through biology or adoption is immaterial – not to mention rude. Each has just as much responsibility as the other; so let them both share in the loving moniker. They are the child's mothers, and that's how best to refer to them. So in the school newsletter, "Jason's mothers" is correct. If you need to distinguish them, it's perfectly fine to say, "Jason's mother Linda says ... while his other mother, Susan, adds ..." In fact, it's always nicer to refer to people by their names when you can.

Steven Petrow is the author of "The Essential Book of Gay Manners and Etiquette" (gayandlesbianmanners.com) and a contributor to the Huffington Post. Ask him your queery at queeries@live.com

Highmark Blue Shield employees with Gov. Ed Rendell at July 24 Pride event.

Highmark Blue Shield Address Diversity and Inclusion on Many Levels

It's not everyday you hear about a corporation doing as much for its customers and employees alike in the realm of diversity and inclusion as one that is located right in our backyard.

Highmark Blue Shield, located in Camp Hill, employs more than 5,000 people in central Pennsylvania and the Lehigh Valley.

The company was named a Most Admired Employer for Minorities in Research Science by the Career Communications Group, based in Baltimore. Profiles in Diversity Journal honored Highmark with the Diversity Leader Award for outstanding diversity communication practices and for offering leadership among corporations in the commitment to diversity. Highmark was also selected as one of the top 100 Best Places to Work in PA by the *Central Penn Business Journal.*

The company strives to build a culture of inclusion for employees in an environment where everyone feels valued and respected because of one's differences and unique contributions. Individual skills, abilities and perspectives are tapped to create business success. When everyone has an opportunity to contribute, the company has an opportunity to succeed and can transfer that to the customers.

As a result, Highmark recognizes the value and teamwork that Business Resource Groups (BRGs) can provide in furthering the company's vision, mission, values and interests.

The BRG aims to provide employees a greater sense of identity, a strong professional and social network, and build capacity for new leadership skills through events and activities that are an added value to the business and are meaningful and relevant to employees. The BRG's activities are aligned with Highmark Blue Shield's strategic priorities and corporate imperatives and as they relate to the marketplace, workplace and community. In addition, activities are designed to help the participants of the group to grow, to develop skills and gain a sense of belonging at the company. Highmark Blue Shield currently has two BRG's established, the Black Network and the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Allies (LGBTA) Network.

The vision of the LGBTA is to leverage its diverse personal experiences to serve as a catalyst in promoting employee inclusion, enriching community outreach and fostering marketplace excellence.

By reaching out to the employee, marketplace and in the community, the LGBTA accomplishes its goals in a variety of ways. For the benefit of all employees, the group provides educational programs and resources for LGBTA Network participants as well as Highmark's leadership and staff in order to support inclusion efforts for LGBT employees. They aid in the professional development of LGBT employees and make recommendations concerning policies and best practices, which recognize the unique needs of LGBT employees.

Throughout the marketplace, the LGBTA Network works to ensure that Highmark's providers, contractors, suppliers, and brokers reflect Highmark's diversity and inclusion values.

In the community, the LGBTA provides organizational awareness regarding LGBT community needs through education, communication and engagement. The group also strives to improve community awareness through volunteerism and sponsorship.

The LGBTA is working to create a stronger presence in the local community and proudly represented Highmark Blue Shield during this year's Central Pa PrideFest, bringing on board many new supporters and advocates for a diverse and inclusive community and workplace.

"Highmark Blue Shield continues in its commitment to provide all employees the opportunity to be the best they can be," said Tija Hilton-Philips, Highmark director of regulatory affairs and diversity council. "When employees feel valued and respected that attitude is reflected in the good things that are happening in the community and the trust and commitment that is made with our customers."

Chamber on the move

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GAY AND LESBIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

By Bill Kretz

The chamber's networking events continue to be successful.

July 6 the Mixer event hosted by the historic Yorktowne Hotel in downtown York was full of political dignitaries, including York Mayor C. Kim Bracey, PA State Representative Eugene DePasquale. Food was provided The Yorktowne Hotel.

Posh Studios sponsored the Aug. 12 mixer. The studio specializes in lgbt-tailored portraits and photography. Chamber members also staffed a popular booth at the Pride Festival of Central PA.

Sept. 14

Remember to mark the next two mixer events on your calendar: Lefevre Funk Architects hosts the next downtown Lancaster event Sept. 14. Then we travel to Mechanicsburg for the Mechanicsburg Art Center mixer Oct. 12, our first visit to this part of the area. Please RSVP and get additional details via the chamber's web site at www.cpglcc.org. The network mixers continue to be a great way to meet people.

From left York Mayor C. Kim Bracey and State Rep. Eugene DePasquale at the Yorktowne Hotel Networking Mixer.

The chamber board continues to be present in various local business events like the 3rd Annual "Celebrate Diversity" Networking Reception June 30 at the Hershey Lodge, where the chamber had a table set up with other diversity non-profit organizations.

Chamber at Lancaster Pride.

July 10 the board was present for the ribbon cutting of the Latino Hispanic Community Center in Harrisburg, where Mayor Linda Thompson spoke and may other regional business leaders and politicians were in attendance.

Russell Boggs and Debra McClain represented the chamber as a sponsor for the July 20 "Blueprint for Prosperity" event at the Harrisburg Hilton. The event discussed the fiscal state of affairs in Harrisburg. On July 21, Boggs and McClain attended the Business Diversity Advisory Council meeting at the Harrisburg Regional Chamber.

The chamber is also be a sponsor of FAB again this year.

The chamber is also looking for volunteers from the business community to participate in our various committee meetings. If you are thinking of joining an lgbt professional organization, please visit our web site and check out the various committees.

Please remember to keep your lgbt dollars within the community. The chamber has the only comprehensive directory for lgbt- owned and lgbt-friendly businesses. Please go to the chamber's web site for more details. The chamber web site is the best source to determine where our community needs to spend its money.

Info: www.cpglcc.org

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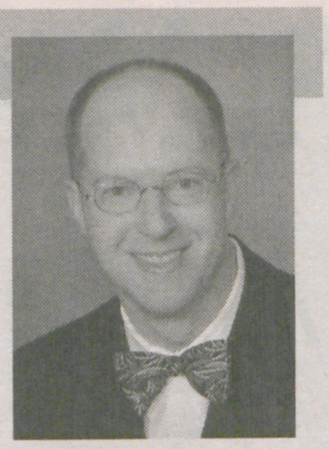
legal column

Estate Planning Basics Revisited



By Leo L. Dunn

Attending Harrisburg's Pride Festival this weekend and receiving questions from attendees as I was volunteering at the Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce booth reminded me why I practice estate planning with a focus on the GLBT community. Our needs are the same as the community-at-large, but due to state and federal laws we must plan slightly differently because the basic protections of marriage are not available to us. So I decided it was time to do a reminder article regarding the four basic documents every GLBT individual should have in place by the time they reach age 40. Age 25 is better, but age 40 is when most people start accumulating wealth and needing to consider health issues for the long run.

Priority one: a living will/health care directive. This protects your decision making now, while you are still alive, in the event you have a medical emergency. It ensures that the person you want making decisions on your behalf is in control and cannot be 'shunted' aside by your next of kin. Remember, even though next of kin may be very supportive today, tomorrow may be different. It can also assure that your partner and friends have access to you if you are hospitalized.

Priority two: a durable power of attorney. This also protects you now, while you are still alive. It ensures that the person you trust to handle your finances and day-to-day matters is responsible for them and empowered to perform tasks for you in the event you have an accident, or simply need to be away for an extended period due to your employment.

Priority three: a last will and testament. This protects your intended beneficiaries after you die. It ensures that your assets go to the person(s) or organization(s) you want to enrich after you die. More importantly, in the case of an unmarried couple (and remember Pennsylvania law does not currently recognize your Connecticut marriage), it makes sure that a house owned in one person's name but paid for by both goes to the other partner after death of the first. It also assures that said partner's family can't talk you into going for a walk on the beach after the funeral and having all the locks changed as you are strolling along in grief. This actually happened in Florida a couple years ago.

Priority four: a HIPAA waiver. Closely associated with priority one, a living will, this allows the person you designate (usually your health care agent) to have access to your medical records if needed in order to make medical decisions for you. This power is implied in your living will/health care directive, but this document expressly provides the power.

Of course, to truly protect yourself and your loved ones, you may need additional documents: a cohabitation agreement, guardianship, trust, new deed, or business transferal contract. That's why you should sit down with an attorney and go over your individual needs. They probably won't be the same as your friend, Jake, who did everything himself. Besides you want to make this easier, not harder, for yourself and your loved ones.

Leo Dunn is an attorney and counselor-at-law practicing in Harrisburg area with a focus on the estate planning needs of the GLBT community. He may be reached at leo@leodunnlaw.com or 717-503-1207.

Lung Association Reports on LGBT Tobacco Use

By M4M Project

A new report titled "Smoking Out a Deadly Threat: Tobacco Use in the LGBT Community" found that smoking rates among the lgbt community appear to be double the national average. Contributing factors include high rates of stress and the role of "bar culture" as a social venue for the lgbt community, which has normalized tobacco use.

Cancer prevention for gay men may not be as simple as putting out a cigarette. According to the American Cancer Society, gay men are at increased risk for skin, prostate, colon and lung cancer due to lack of health care coverage and discrimination.

Lack of health coverage.

Some companies offer same-sex benefits; but for those that do not, gay partners are left without adequate health coverage- which is a factor in early detection of cancer.

Ask your benefits specialist if your company is a gay-friendly company or if they offer same-sex partner benefits. If you're not out at work, have a friend make an anonymous call expressing your concerns. Time is critical in the race against cancer. A cancer-free lifestyle is worth a few uncomfortable moments on the phone.

Health care discrimination and negative experiences.

Many gay men feel apprehensive about getting medical help for fear of discrimination. I am reminded of a time when a friend of mine went to his doctor awaiting a diagnosis of the flu. Once the doctor found out he was gay, she told him to go to the HIV/AIDS clinic immediately. Terrified and tearful, he solicited a second opinion from a doctor he knew was gay-friendly. His illness was indeed the stomach flu with no sign of HIV. My friend's misdiagnosis and his doctor's discomfort with gay patients could have easily resulted in a phobia against medical professionals. For this reason some gay men do not visit the doctor, which can delay early detection of cancer.

A few simple observations can aid in finding a medical professional that is sensitive to your needs. Don't be afraid to ask questions or look around their office for gay-friendly publications. These tips on finding a gay-affirmative psychotherapist can apply to any medical professional: Gay-affirmative medical professionals.

Gay men and smoking.

Smoke-filled bars and clubs are common hang outs for some gay men. For this reason, according to the American Cancer Society, gay men are more likely to smoke or be exposed to smoke. A recent gay.com article on gay smoking cites 36 percent of lgbt adults are smokers, compared with 25 percent of all adults. Smoking accelerates the progression of AIDS and increases the risk of lung cancer. HIV also accelerates smoking-induced emphysema.

Full ALA report: www.lungusa.org/assets/documents/publications/lung-disease-data/lgbt-report.pdf. Contact: 717-233-7190, M4M is a component of AIDS Community Alliance.

Study on Lesbian Families Says 17-year-old Adolescents Healthy and Happy

The Williams Institute, a research center on sexual orientation law and public policy at UCLA School of Law, released a new report from the U.S. National Longitudinal Lesbian Family Study (NLLFS) published today in Pediatrics.

The longest-running study ever conducted on American lesbian families found that the 17-year-old adolescent daughters and sons of lesbian mothers, all conceived through donor insemination, were rated higher than their peers in social, academic, and overall competence, and lower in aggressive behavior, rule-breaking, and social problems, on standardized assessments of psychological adjustment. The organization has been studying the same group of lesbian families since 1986. The study is the only study to have followed the daughters and sons of lesbians from conception to adulthood. The results released today are based on data gathered when the adolescents were 17 years old.

The report also found no differences in the psychological adjustment of NLLFS adolescents who had been conceived by known and unknown donors, nor between those who reported homophobic stigmatization and those who did not.

Although there are over 40 studies on young children with same-sex parents, data on adolescents reared by same-sex parents are very limited. The current report shows that despite homophobic stigmatization, the adolescent daughters and sons of lesbians demonstrate more competencies and fewer behavioral problems than age-matched peers. These findings support the position statements of all major professional associations concerning the well-being of children growing up in lesbian and gay families.

The NLLFS is spearheaded by principal investigator Nanette Gartrell, M.D., a 2010 Williams Distinguished Scholar and also Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California, San Francisco.

"Our data show that adolescents reared in lesbian parent households are psychologically healthy and high-functioning," said Nanette Gartrell, MD. "The mothers provided healthy, loving and safe environments where their daughters and sons could grow and thrive. We have followed these families since the mothers were inseminating or pregnant, and at each interview, we have been impressed with how well the kids are doing. At 17, we find that the kids are well-adjusted and well-equipped for college and beyond."

Info: Pediatrics: Gartrell N, Bos H. "The U.S. National Longitudinal Lesbian Family Study: Psychological Adjustment of the 17-year-old Adolescents." Online 7 June 2010: http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/

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It Was A Very Good Year

Pride Festival of Central PA Wrap Up

With 5,000 attendees and 100 vendors, the 2010 Pride Festival of Central PA was another success due to the devoted volunteer efforts of its organizers. The 20th Anniversary of the Pride Festival of Central PA is Fri., July 29 – Sun., July 31, 2011.

Organizers extend a special thank you to Silent Witness Peacekeepers of Central PA for their dedicated service and support of our festival and parade. The festival committee also thanks members of the community and the businesses and venues that who support Pride by attending and hosting fundraising events throughout the year.

2010 Festival Chair Jeffrey Clouser

Feedback -The festival organizers wants to hear from you so they know how to better serve the community and provide quality events going forward. Feedback will provide organizers with the necessary information to obtain corporate sponsorships for future events. Visit their website -www.prideofcentralpa.org - to complete the two surveys listed under the survey tab.

Community Meeting – Festival organizers are looking for new board members, committee chairs, and volunteers. Please complete the application found on their website and attend their community meeting Sept 21, 6 :30 p.m., UU Church of Harrisburg, 1280 Clover Lane, Harrisburg, PA 17113.

Wrap Up - To the sound of whistles and revving motorcycle engines, the 5th Annual Pride Fest Unity Parade presented by Highmark Blue Shield started its way down Front Street in Harrisburg July 24. This year's parade included 40 entries of elaborately decorated floats, walking units, and marching bands.

Mark Smith, Parade Chair announced the winners of the parade competition from the North Stage at the Pride Festival. This year's parade winners are: Grand Marshall Award - St. Paul's UCC, First Place Float - St. Paul's UCC. First Place Vehicle - HACC Allies, First Place Walking Group – PFLAG, and Second Place Walking Group - Trans Central PA. Judges for this year's parade were Judy Chambers, editor of Lavender Letter, Dan Miller, City Controller, and Sabrina Kreps, DJ at Liquid 891.

Voices United, the 5th Annual Musical Celebration of all that Pride has come to mean in the region, was held at Market Square Presbyterian Church July 23. This year's event celebrated "One World, One Goal, Equality for All" and involved The Harrisburg Men's Chorus, Central PA Womyn's Chorus, and The One Voice Choir of MCC of the Spirit. Paul Foltz coordinated the concert in spectacular fashion as always.

Spirits United, a Pride Interfaith service was hosted by MCC of the Spirit on July 25. The theme "One World, One Goal, One Human Family" was devised from the Pride 2010 theme. The service offers the lgbt community and its allies an opportunity to celebrate unity through worship. The service began with a call to gather from the shofar, ram's horn, and Jewish chant by the Cantor Manel Frau-Cortes and Rabbi Jordi Gendra-Molina from Temple Beth Shalom. This gathering call was followed by a Buddhist drum called to mindfulness by Shuso Marshall from Blue Mountain Lotus Society. Rev John Ward and Shirley Keith Knox from St. Paul's UCC, Alana Berger from UUCH, and Rev Charles Tigard, MCC of the Spirit, offered reflections and meditations. Music was offered by the MCC of the Spirit Choir joined by members of the Harrisburg Men's Chorus and Central PA Woymn's Chorus. Marlene Kanuck coordinated the service splendidly.

Two stages of entertainment, featuring the DC Cowboys, Rose Hudson, Michelle Murlin and Three Twelve, were crowd pleasers and the young and young at heart enjoyed our family zone.

There are many individuals, organizations, and businesses that help make the Pride Festival the best event that it can be. From sponsors to donors, from volunteers to patrons, everyone in the community plays a role in the success of the Pride Festival of Central PA. Please make sure you thank those organizations, businesses, sponsors, donors, and volunteers who have made the whole weekend possible.

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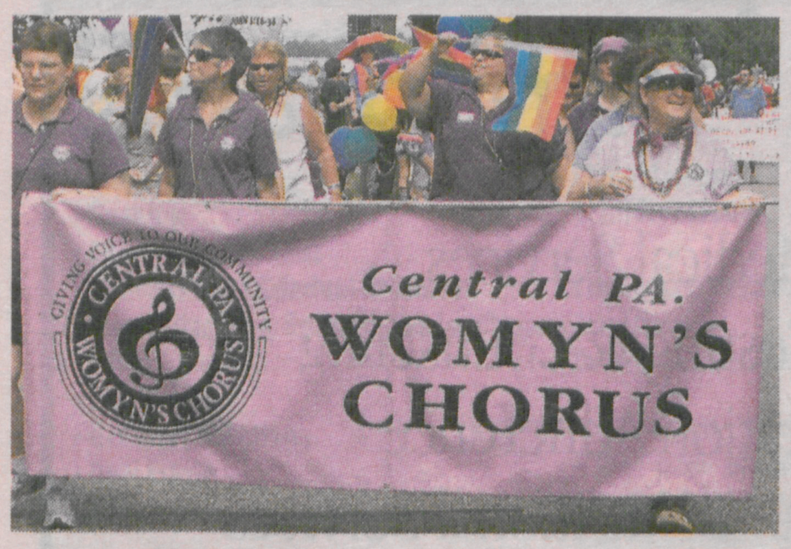

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The AIDS Fund of South Central PA and AIDS Community Alliance collaborated with the Ephrata Performing Arts Center to "pay the RENT". Ticketholders from across the region gathered for two benefit performances of the popular musical that portrays living with HIV in NYC during the early years of the epidemic. To view a 10-minute documentary about living with HIV in south central Pennsylvania go to youtube.com and search for "Second Lazarus".

How can you help? Attend the World AIDS Day Luncheon, Dec. 2 (236-5040), sponsored by The AIDS Fund. Call ACA (1-800-867-1550) or visit www.aca-pa.com and ask how you can help or donate. Know your HIV status. Get tested.

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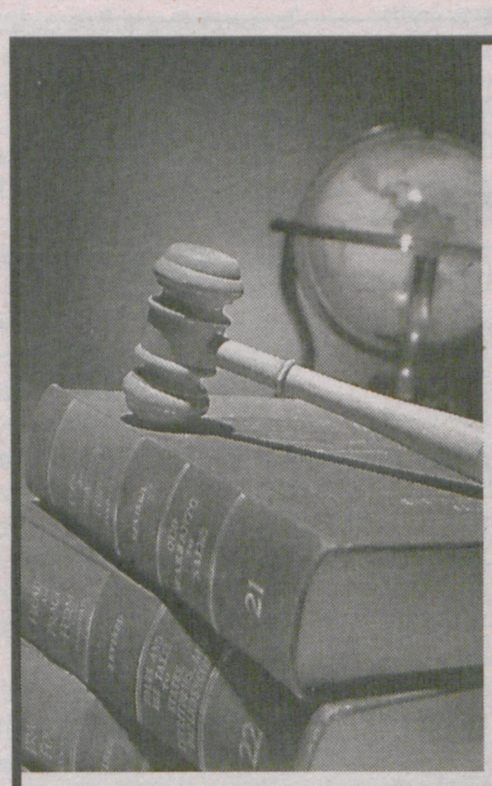

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Top 10 Picks for Philly Fringe Festival

By Debra Miller

The 2010 Festival line-up is staggering, with nearly 1200 performances of approximately 200 shows, ranging from theater and comedy to dance, music, and the visual arts.

In a league of its own, and superseding any list of top picks, is Lucinda Childs' Dance, with music by Philip Glass and film by the late Sol LeWitt. It's uplifting that these universally respected avant-garde giants of the 20th century, whose Minimalist/Conceptual work was misunderstood and criticized in its early years, would acknowledge their experimental roots and bring a reprise of their interdisciplinary collaboration to the Philadelphia Live Arts Festival. The two surviving members of this dream team will be on hand for a pre-show discussion on September 10; this is your chance to converse with living legends.

Along with Dance, my top 10 Best Bets for 2010 are:

EgoPo, The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the Direction of the Marquis de Sade (Fringe)

Theatre Exile, Iron (Fringe)

Luna Theater, Thom Pain (based on nothing) (Fringe)

Lucidity Suitcase Intercontinental, ¡El Conquistador! (Live Arts)

Jérôme Bel, Cédric Andrieux (Live Arts)

Nature Theater of Oklahoma, Romeo and Juliet (Live Arts)

Nevermore Theater Project, The Tell-Tale Heart (Fringe)

Hyphen-Nation Arts, The Jane Goodall: Experience (Fringe)

Plays and Players, Hear Again Radio Project (Fringe)

Madhouse Theater Company, Dysfictional Circumstances (Fringe)

The top three productions are by a trio of the most consistently excellent, compelling theater companies in Philadelphia. Following its stirring adaptation of Beckett's Company last year, EgoPo will kick off its "Theater of Cruelty" season at the Fringe with Peter Weiss's Marat/Sade. Brenna Geffers directs a roster of all-stars, including Ross Beschler, Steven Wright, David Blatt, and Theatre Exile's Joe Canuso, in the controversial and unrelentingly sadistic play-within-a-play, staged in the aftermath of the French Revolution. Exile, too, returns to the Festival after a five-year hiatus, with Philly Fringe co-founder Deborah Block (co-artistic director at Exile) directing award-winning actresses Catharine Slusar and Kim Carson in Iron. Set in a woman's prison, Iron tells the story of a mother and daughter struggling to come to terms with each other, and with themselves, fifteen years after a brutal murder. And Gregory Scott Campbell directs another of Luna Theater's characteristically quirky shows, Thom Pain--a haunting anecdotal monologue by New York playwright Will Eno, which won the Fringe First Award in Edinburgh. With their accomplished casts, directors, and design teams, these disturbing dramas promise to be the most professional of the Festival, while still exhibiting the cutting-edge intensity for which the companies, and the Fringe, are known.

My next three picks are part of the Live Arts Festival, distinguished from the Philly Fringe by selection process. The Philly Fringe is unfiltered; both new and established artists can present their work without an invitation or preliminary judging. Live Arts features renowned contemporary performing artists from the US and around the world, who have been invited to the Festival by producing director Nick Stuccio.

Thaddeus Phillips' Lucidity Suitcase Intercontinental was selected to present its innovative fusion of live theater and film, ¡El Conquistador! Combining the daydreams of an impoverished underdog with the popular phenomenon of telenovelas (Latin American soap operas), the performance (presented in Spanish, with English supertitles) makes reference to such classic sources as Hamlet and The Count of Monte Cristo. Also noteworthy in Live Arts is Cédric Andrieux, a behind-the-scenes autobiography of the eponymous French dancer, in collaboration with choreographer Jérôme Bel. I can't help but think of Avedon's famous photos of Nureyev's feet, evincing the torturous training that results in a work of beauty on stage. And the New York based Nature Theater of Oklahoma presents an amusing retelling of Romeo and Juliet, synthesized from telephone interviews with everyday people who were asked to give an account of the story in their own words. Their embellishments, inaccuracies, and reinventions include scenes and characters that were never part of Shakespeare's original.

Nevermore Theater Project offers another time-honored classic in the Fringe, Edgar Allen Poe's The Tell-Tale Heart. This one is a faithful word-for-word staging of the dark short story, starring Barrymore recipient John Zak as Poe's man on the brink of insanity, and performed at the appropriately creepy Mütter Museum (admission to the museum's collections is not included).

Three more Fringe events round out my Top 10 list, all promising to be both unique and entertaining. Hypen-Nation Arts' The Jane Goodall: Experience features Marcel Williams Foster as the renowned anthropologist, in a performance/lecture/tribute to the 50th anniversary of her pioneering research in Tanzania. Now working in the world of dance and theater, Foster trained at Goodall's Institute, and incorporates years of research, a profound love of apes, and a virtuoso shift between humans and primates in his self-described "peculiar drag parody." More traditional is Plays and Players' Hear Again Radio Project, comprising vintage radio dramas from the 1940s, performed live with authentic costumes, sound effects, music, and commercials. Last but not least is Madhouse Theater Company's Dysfictional Circumstances, a twisted dark comedy about Nazi propagandist filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, which just won the Audience Choice Award for New Work in the Theater Alliance of Greater Philadelphia's Spark Showcase.

If you love inane Jerry Lewis movies circa 1960, and find oversized glasses, crossed eyes, protruding teeth, and grating voices hilarious, you probably number among the masses that can't seem to get enough of Pig Iron Theatre Company. In light of the success of last year's Welcome to Yuba City (both in the Live Arts Festival and with the Barrymore Awards), I would be remiss if I didn't remind fans to get their tickets early, because this year's offerings by Pig Iron (Cankerblossom) and Charlotte Ford (Chicken) are sure to sell out fast.

Also among the annual favorites is Brian Sanders' JUNK, this year performing Sanctuary (which comes with a warning that the production may contain nudity). Described as "a dance of intense movement, ritual, and mistaken assumptions about the past," and using a 14 x 120' wall as the stage, the perfectly toned gravity-defying dancers will undoubtedly wow Live Arts audiences again in 2010.

The 14th annual Philly Festival runs September 3-18. If you're truly living on the fringe, it's not likely you'll be able to see much of it, so choose your shows wisely. At a pricey $325/person ($650/couple), the "all-access pass" gives access to all shows, not access for all people.

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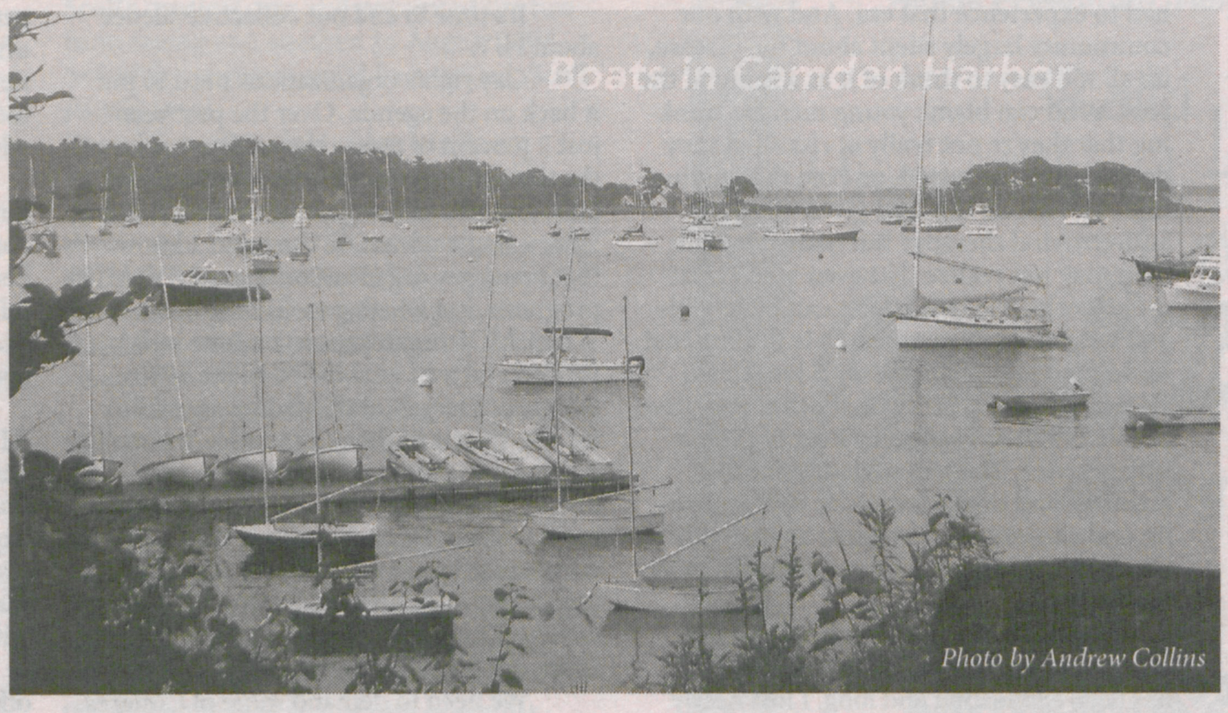
Patricia Neal passed away August 8, distinguished star of "The Day the Earth Stood Still" (1951), wealthy matron Emily Eustace Failenson in "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (1961), and middle-aged housekeeper Alma Brown in Hud (1963), for which she won the Oscar Award for Best Actress. Back in 2004, our paparazzi snapped Neal, center, at an arts benefit with playwright and Central Voice correspondent Christopher Tittel, right, and benefit patron Bill Ramaskewich, left. Tittle's play "True North", about the Boy Scouts and lessons learned has been presented at The Source Theater, Washington, DC.

Exploring *Coastal Maine*

OUT OF TOWN
by Andrew Collins

Maine's classically quaint seaside towns and breezy beaches seem tailor-made for a relaxing vacation and sure enough, the state's coastal sections are invaded by pleasure seekers all summer. Prestigious, blue-blood retreats like Kennebunkport and Camden overflow with magnificent estates, while the pristine scenery of Acadia National Park and Camden Hills State Park draw scads of hikers and bikers. Artsy and gay-popular Ogunquit makes a wonderfully low-keyed alternative to Provincetown, while hip Portland and up-and-coming Rockland offer sophisticated arts and dining.


Boats in Camden Harbor
Photo by Andrew Collins

The state's shoreline twists and turns for an astonishing 3,478 miles - counting every inlet, cove, and bay; only the states of Alaska, Florida and Louisiana can claim more miles of waterfront. You could spend all summer exploring the dozens of inviting hamlets up and down the coast.

The southwestern edge of the state - just 70 miles from Boston and about 300 miles from both Montreal and New York City - is not only the most accessible, it has the most to offer gay and lesbian travelers. The region extends from the bustling outlet-shopping hub of Kittery north through Ogunquit and up to Kennebunkport.

Fringed by a lovely 3-mile beach, tiny Ogunquit first developed a discernible gay following in the 1930s, with the opening of one of the country's first successful summer theaters, the Ogunquit Playhouse. It still presents first-rate theatrical productions today. The gay presence grew in the '60s, when hippies and beatniks started regularly renting cottages and homes here. By the following decade the scene fully blossomed with the opening of a gay guest house, as well as a disco called Anabelle's (still open but now called O2).

U.S. 1 and Shore Road, the main drags through the village, bustle with funky shops, art galleries, boutiques and several good restaurants. It's a very short walk to the beach from just about any point in town. Ogunquit supports a pair of lively gay nightclubs, a piano lounge, and several restaurants with inviting bars. In a state where beaches can sometimes be pebbly or difficult to access, Ogunquit has one of Maine's most celebrated ones - the northern reaches of this fine, golden spit of sand draw a predominantly lesbian and gay crowd.

Consider an excursion south to Kittery's hundreds of mid- and high-end outlet shops. Or check out York's Stonewall Kitchen - nearly 20 years ago, a local gay couple named Jonathan King and Jim Stott started selling their fabulous jams, mustards, relishes and sauces at a farmers market. They soon formed this now-internationally renowned emporium and mail-order company of delicious gourmet foods. For the best scenery on this trip, follow Shore Road south from Ogunquit through York's Cape Neddick, where you can stop for a picnic at the park that overlooks the dignified Nubble Lighthouse (built in 1879).

There are about a dozen gay-oriented accommodations in Ogunquit, most of them male-owned but catering to a mix of women and men. Just a few of the excellent possibilities include Moon Over Maine (http://www.moonovermaine.com), a fully restored 1830s Cape-style house with period-decor, well-chosen art, and a great location in the heart of the village; and the reasonably priced Ogunquit Beach Inn (http://www.ogunquitbeachinn.com), a handsome little 1920s compound comprising a main house with five guest rooms, as well as two cottages with full kitchens (rented weekly). A bit more upscale are the lovely Gazebo Inn

(http://www.gazeboguesthouse.com), a handsome 14-room property with two hot tubs and a gym and sauna; and the beautifully situated Rockmere Lodge (http://www.rockmere.com), which is just off the famed Marginal Way walking path - most rooms have ocean views.

Charming Portland lies within striking distance of Ogunquit, perfect if you need a dose of urbanity. Don't overlook this youthful, progressive city as a base, either, especially if you'd rather browse museums and stroll along shop-filled streets than loll about on the beach. Portland claims a dynamic arts scene and some of the best restaurants in Maine.

You can also check out a few very fun GLBT nightspots.

The city crowns a hilly peninsula, surrounded by rivers and harbors - you'll see water from many points and find the bulk of the city's best restaurants, shops and bars in the historic Old Port district, a warren of cobbled lanes and vintage redbrick warehouses fringed by a phalanx of wharves. A short drive or moderate walk puts you square in Portland's West End, where grand sea captains' mansions mingle with smaller row houses. More than two decades of intense rehabilitation have given the neighborhood a graceful countenance, and lesbians and gay men have restored many of these homes.

In the heart of downtown's arts district, the gay-friendly Eastland Park Hotel (http://www.eastlandparkhotel.com) has tastefully appointed rooms with handsome colonial-inspired furnishings - several units have kitchens. Amenities include a well-equipped fitness center, and a rooftop lounge with great city views. More intimate gay-popular options include the historic Inn at ParkSpring (http://www.innatparkspring.com), which is just steps from the Portland Art Museum and six warmly furnished rooms; and the Morrill Mansion B&B (http://www.morrillmansion.com), a 19th-century mansion on a picturesque West End Street - the seven tasteful room contains period-style furnishings.

To see a less-developed side of the state, it's about a two-hour drive from Portland - much of it along a very scenic stretch of U.S. 1 - to the resort communities along western Penobscot Bay, including Rockland and Camden. You're not going to encounter as many gay travelers out this way, but there are a handful of very gay-friendly accommodations. Maine's Mid-Coast is a place for quiet vacations, ideal if you're a hiker, photographer, fishing enthusiast, or sailor. Camden is home to a fleet of Windjammer sailing ships (http://www.mainewindjammercruises.com), which can be booked not only on multiple-day excursions throughout the region but also for afternoon jaunts along Penobscot Bay.

The craggy 1,000-ft peaks of Camden Hills State Park are a regional highlight; you can tread along more than 20 miles of rugged nature and hiking trails through this dramatic 5,500-acre paradise, and overnight in a 112-site camping area. The once-workaday town of Rockland has blossomed of late, with several outstanding restaurants and cafes. The key draw here is one of the foremost small art collections in the nation, the Farnsworth Art Museum, which contains works by many noted Maine painters, including the George Bellows, Louise Nevelson, and the Wyeth . The on-site Wyeth Center explores that famous family of painters.

Rockland's elegant, yet reasonably priced LimeRock Inn, is operated by a knowledgeable and friendly couple Frank Isganitis & P.J. Walter, who prepare a delicious breakfast each morning. Rooms in this handsome Queen Anne Victorian are done in period style, but with such modern perks as flat-panel TVs with HDTV/DVD and clock radios with iPod docks. First-rate restaurants and galleries are just steps away. The gay-owned Camden Harbour Inn (http://www.camdenharbourinn.com), with its spectacular location overlooking the town's harbor, is ideal for a luxury getaway - the 18 rooms and suites are sumptuously appointed, and the on-site restaurant, Natalie's, serves exceptional contemporary American fare.

Still about 75 miles farther "down east" (Maine lingo for in the direction of the Canadian Maritimes - "down" refers to the fact that longitude decreases as you travel east), lies Mt. Desert Island. Here you'll find the resort town of Bar Harbor and the adjacent 40,000-acre Acadia National Park. A 27-mile Loop Road meanders through the park, accessing trailheads and many scenic vistas. Some hiking trails climb up to 1,530-foot Cadillac Mountain, the highest point on the Eastern Seaboard, and still others hug the granite-strewn shore. In Bar Harbor, the Abbe Museum, set in the 1893 former YMCA overlooking the village green, contains an enormous trove of artifacts and exhibits that trace the state's Native American history.

Bar Harbor has dozens of motels, hotels and inns, among them the gay-friendly Anne's White Column Inn (http://www.anneswhitecolumns.com) and its sister property, the larger and more elegant Cleftstone Manor (http://www.cleftstone.com). The advantage of Anne's White Column Inn is its close proximity to area shopping and dining. One other excellent LGBT-friendly option in Bar Harbor is the Aysgarth Station (http://www.aysgarth.com), which is quite affordable and located very close to several good restaurants.

With so long a shoreline and so relatively small a population, Maine offers one precious commodity that's all too rare in the northeastern U.S.: space. Although parts of the coast has been developed with mini-golf centers and condo colonies, the majority of it remains beautifully preserved and ideal for a memorable getaway.

Andrew Collins covers gay travel for the New York Times-owned website About.com and is the author of Fodor's Gay Guide to the USA.

Is HIV the Unchecked Gay Fire?

By David Mixner

If you listen to gay rights discussions these days, you'd think that marriage equality and "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" are the only issues that matter. And they do matter — for our dignity and our fundamental civil rights. But there is a fire in our house that we are no longer talking about, that we pretend no longer exists: the unchecked spread of HIV.

Not only did HIV never leave the gay community, it's getting worse. New HIV infections among gay men have doubled in the last 15 years. Last week, the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention reported that gay and bisexual men are more than 44 times as likely as straight men to test positive for HIV. But instead of increasing funding in response, states are slashing their prevention budgets.

Amid this crisis, the silence from our community is deafening. Where's the outrage? Where's the protest? Understandably, after decades of coping with AIDS, we've been eager to change the subject. But in our impatience to move on, we've overshot the mark. Our silence is fueling the spread of HIV.

Recently, I was at a large dinner party, and the conversation turned to AIDS. Most people seated at the table said that they didn't know anyone who was HIV positive. I knew for a fact that two had recently become infected. They sat quietly and chose not to reveal their status. My heart broke for them. They were closeted about HIV in a room full of out gay men.

In the early days of AIDS, silence equaled death. We had to come out of the closet to confront the disease. With illness and death all around us, we had a powerful motivation to stay safe. As a community, there was a shared sense of responsibility to help protect our friends.

Mercifully, younger gay men never had to experience that era. And with our community largely silent about the disease, it's all too easy to think of it as a thing of the past. Who can blame young men for thinking that they're not really at risk, that they don't need to be tested, or even that getting infected isn't all that bad given effective antiretroviral therapy? But many younger men may not realize that even when treatment works, the side effects can be terrible and long-term. New research is finding that more than half of people with long-term HIV have early senility or another cognitive problem, not to mention a host of premature geriatric illnesses such as bone loss, arthritis, and organ failure, as well as insulin and cholesterol problems. You wouldn't choose to get diabetes or emphysema. Why HIV?

The struggle to stay safe is hard for older gay men too. The fight against AIDS has been exhausting and long. I lost nearly 300 friends to the disease. Many of us feel isolated and alone, depressed, guilty and tired. For more than 25 years we have been expected to have safe sex, every time. That is not easy to sustain, even with the powerful memories of those we have lost.

Recent studies underscore just how hard it is for us to confront the reality of HIV. One major study found that nearly half of HIV-positive gay men don't know their status — a sign that many of us are afraid to be tested or in denial about our risk. Studies also find that half of HIV-negative gay men don't know the HIV status of their casual partners.

It's time to end our collective silence about HIV.

Gay rights organizations need to put it back on the agenda. Over the past year, just 2 percent of press releases from some of the top national organizations were about HIV, and two major gay organizations didn't issue a single release on the topic. I know that many gay organizations have HIV/AIDS programs, but what's gone is the advocacy. When AIDS organizations became well funded and well established in the 1990s, gay groups largely abdicated responsibility for the disease to them. But today, the major AIDS organizations rightly serve a very diverse group of people — gay and straight men, women, IV drug users. If the CDC's numbers tell us anything, it's that gay men are still far more affected by this disease than anyone. Our leaders have a responsibility to speak out more forcefully and more often.

We need to demand more of Congress and the administration. HIV prevention works, but just 20 percent of gay men have access to effective prevention programs. Prevention funding is just a tiny sliver of the federal AIDS budget, and has been largely flat for 6 years. Last year, California, which has been a leader in fighting HIV, cut its prevention budget from $54 million to $18 million, and many other states cut their budgets as well. And HIV prevention campaigns often don't resonate with gay men. We need new approaches that are relevant to gay men today — young and old, black, Latino and white.

But real change won't come from the government or big organizations. It will come from each of us. Ask yourself: Have I been tested for HIV in the last year? Have I talked about HIV with my partners? Have I reached out to friends that I'm worried about, who may be at risk?

As tragic as this disease has been, AIDS galvanized a generation of gay men, and it showed that we are a force to be reckoned with. Today, a new generation is taking gay rights to a place that was inconceivable just a decade ago — fighting for our right to marry and to serve our country openly and with honor.

But taking care of ourselves and each other is just as important to our future. Every one of us needs to confront the resurgence of HIV. The first step is ending our silence.

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Conservation League Honors Terry Eberly

The Izaak Walton League of America, a national leader in community-based conservation, presented Terry Eberly of York, Pennsylvania, with its prestigious National Hall of Fame Award. Eberly received the award at the League's annual convention last month in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the conservation of America's natural and renewable resources.

Eberly is involved with all of the chapter's youth projects, from fishing to pheasants, bird houses to sorting brass from shooting events. He also engages Boy Scout troops interested in conservation activities and connects chapter needs with Scout interests, anything from building a bench to cleaning debris on the club grounds – which works to everyone's benefit.

Eberly led the chapter's indoor trout pond project for many years, which served as both a public education event and a fundraiser for the chapter. The trout pond – part of the chapter's larger York Outdoor Show – gave many youth and adults their first fishing experience and engaged the public in water and fishery conservation. Eberly made arrangements with a local fire company to bring in pond water and arranged for trout to be delivered from a local hatchery. He also worked with chapter volunteers to staff the event – but was always found there himself during the week the trout pond was open to the public.

In addition, Eberly worked with the staff at the Margaret E. Moul Home, a facility for physically and mentally challenged adults, to bring 30 residents to fish the trout pond the day before it opened to the public. Eberly took the largest fish the kids caught each year and had a taxidermist mount it, providing the mounted fish to the Margaret E. Moul Home so the residents could remember their experience. All the other fish the kids caught that day were filleted onsite and taken back to the facility to eat!

"He was an advisor of mine when I was a junior Ike 25 years ago and he's still a critical part of the chapter, from running youth programs to welcoming new members," says past chapter president Nate Ehrhart, who currently serves as the chapter's first vice president." Terry helps instill the League's conservation ethic in everyone he meets and lives the League's mission as defenders of soil, air, woods, water, and wildlife."

"Terry Eberly exemplifies the kind of volunteer leadership and commitment to conservation that the Izaak Walton League is all about," says Jim Madsen, the League's national president. "We are proud to count him among our ranks, and to honor his service to protecting America's outdoors with this award."

Founded in 1922, the Izaak Walton League of America (www.iwla.org) protects America's outdoors through education, community-based conservation and promoting outdoor recreation.

Settlement Reached Over Elderly Couple's Troubles

In a case where a gay couple's legal documentation was ignored by county officials, Clay Greene and the estate of Harold Scull, Greene's deceased partner of 20 years, reached a settlement resolving their lawsuit against the County of Sonoma, in a case in which the County forcefully separated Greene from his partner of 20 years.

Greene was represented by staff from the National Center for Lesbian Rights (NCLR) and The Law Office of Anne N. Dennis and Stephen O'Neill and Margaret Flynn of Tarkington, O'Neill, Barrack & Chong.

"We applaud NCLR for its leadership in winning a case that serves as a powerful reminder about the types of legal protections, respect and dignity that all LGBT older adults deserve," said Michael Adams, SAGE's executive director. "While the harm against Clay Greene and Harold Scull is irreparable, this settlement, and the policy changes it compelled, will create long lasting improvements in the lives of LGBT older adults."

According to NCLR, Greene and Scull lived together for 20 years and had executed both mutual powers of attorney for medical and financial decisions and wills naming each other as beneficiaries.

In April 2008, County employees separated the couple after Scull fell outside their shared home. In the next three months, County officials ignored the couple's legal documentation, unlawfully auctioned their possessions, terminated their lease, and forced Greene into an assisted living facility against his will.

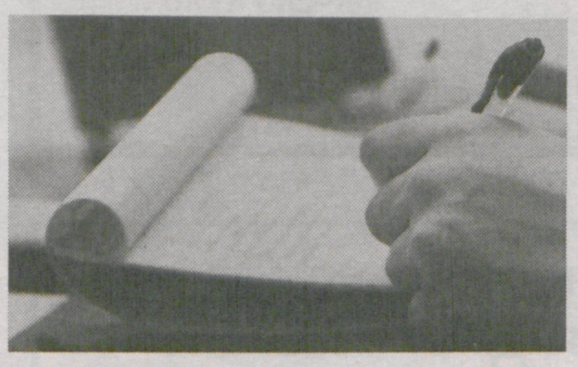
The County did not consult Greene in Scull's medical care and prevented the two from seeing one another. In August 2008, before the partners could be reunited, Scull passed away.

"Too often, lgbt older adults are vulnerable to the discrimination of the very institutions that are meant to protect them," said Adams. "This settlement sends a strong message and will help improve services to lgbt elders who rely on the assistance of the Sonoma County Public Guardian's Office."

Greene and Scull's estate will receive $653,000 to compensate for the damages the couple suffered due to the County's discriminatory and unlawful conduct. In addition, the County has modified a number of policies in its Public Guardian's Office, including requiring County employees to follow protocols before seizing private property, preventing County employees from relocating elders or others against their will, and prohibiting County employees from backdating information in their guardianship database.

Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE) is the country's largest and oldest organization dedicated to improving the lives of LGBT older adults.

Find the Writer Within at Writers' Conference



Do you make-up bedtime stories? Do you have family documents and research? Is writing something you enjoy in your business life? Do you journal?

If so, have you thought about going to a writers conference but felt intimidated by the "real" writers? Then the "Mid-Atlantic Writers Conference: A Writers Conference for Non-Writers" may be for you.

The conference is October 2, 8 a.m.- 5:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Conference Center in Dover, Delaware. You must pre-register before September 18.

The conference brings non-writers together with established writers in a casual environment to help the beginners jump start their writing ambitions, whether for one specific project or to fulfill a dream. Unlike other writers' conferences, each session is geared toward the non- or beginning writer.

Presenters are published authors, professional writers, and educators who will show you the basics on how to get started and find support. As with any endeavor, there are tips, tricks, and resources. You'll learn about these while receiving advice from the region's established writing community.

This year's big name is bestselling mystery and young adult author Mary Kennedy. She's sold 40 novels to major publishers and has made the Waldenbooks, BookScan and Publishers Weekly best-seller lists. Currently she is writing an adult mystery series, "The Talk Radio Mysteries", which is set in a fictional town in south Florida. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn How to Write a Mystery from Mary.

Choose your interest in fiction, non-fiction and memoir, or poetry. Stay the day in that track, or mix it up to get a taste of all that is on offer. Add some creative bling by lunching with an author who will answer your questions and talk about how they got started. Or have dinner with a writing legend. Get one-on-one advice for a manuscript already started or a project you have in mind.

Info: www.DelmarvaDiscussions.org/conference, 301-724-9049, bhacker@Delmarva-Discussions.org.

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Open Stage Celebrates Quarter Century

Open Stage of Harrisburg offers its 25th season, which opens this fall with the Tony-nominated musical comedy [title of show], directed by Artistic Director Don Alsedek.

"Looking back on Open Stage's 25 years of live theatre, I see how far we have come. As a director, I am inspired by the possibilities of what's next as we challenge ourselves and our audience to new, transcending experiences in theatre," says Alsedek. "Our 25th Season aspires to take all of us on that next journey."

Join Open Stage for the opening night performance of [title of show] Oct. 8 and stay for the anniversary party after to celebrate 25 seasons - just 180 miles off Broadway!

For all advanced ticket reservations, including subscriptions and groups, call our new Direct Reservation Line 232-1505 or visit www.openstagehbg.com. Tickets may be purchased at the door starting one hour prior to curtain.

Admission to Mainstage productions is $27 reserved seating and $21 for students with ID. [title of show] tickets are $30 and $23 for students. GLITTERAMA and COURT STREET CABARET are $18 general admission. Pay-What-You-Will Thursday tickets are subject to availability and go on sale in the Open Stage lobby one hour prior to performance.

Open Stage, 223 Walnut Street, is located on the street level of the Walnut Street Parking Garage in downtown Harrisburg. The theatre lobby opens one hour prior to performance. Visit openstagehbg.com for curtain times and more information.

This season is funded, in part, by the Cultural Enrichment Fund, the capital region's united arts fund. Open Stage of Harrisburg is a Constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for American theatre.

Civil Unions Means Money Study Says

Hawai'i recently faced the same-sex civil union issue in its state legislature with House Bill 444.

After all the rice and confetti settles, what is the estimated economic impact of same-sex marriage?

The Williams Institute estimates that between 569 and 1,285 same-sex couples will enter civil unions in the first four years that registration is available. Over 20 studies conducted during the past 10 years, including by a number of state governments and the Congressional Budget Office, suggest that HB 444 will boost the economy of Hawai'i through increased spending and jobs.

Over 20 studies by academic institutions, governments, and trade industry associations have shown that recognizing same-sex couples is likely to increased spending in a state, creating jobs and tax revenues.

As same-sex couples enter civil unions, businesses in the state will experience increased spending on civil union celebrations. The institute estimates that over four years, these couples will spend between $4.2 million to $9.5 million on their civil union celebrations. This estimate is just of spending by the couples themselves. If out-of-state guest travel to these celebrations is similar to that of travel to weddings of same-sex couples in Massachusetts, out-of-state guests will spend between $17.8 million and $40.3 million in Hawai'i over four years on hotels, food, entertainment, and retail. This estimate does not include the spending of in-state guests or the spending by all guests on gifts. This increase in spending by same-sex couples and their out-of-state guests will also lead to the creation of 193 to 333 new jobs in the state, most directly in businesses related to the travel and events.

Info: http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/pdf/HICivilUnion_Williams.pdf

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